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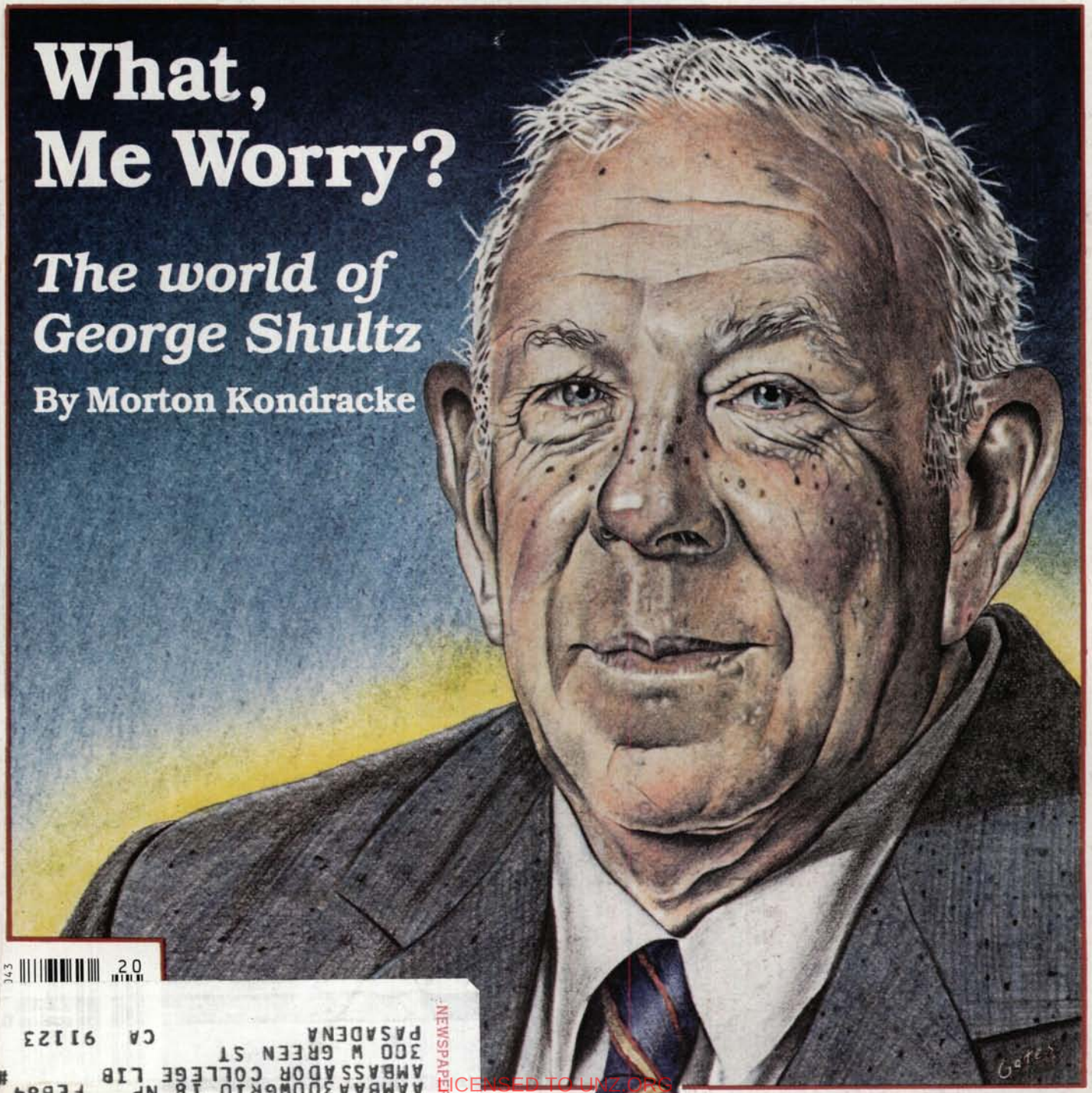


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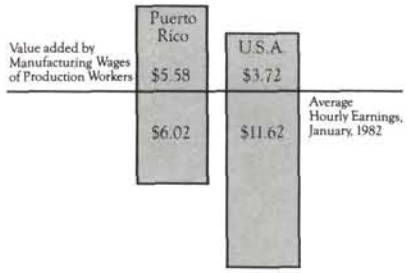


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*Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census and U.S. and Puerto Rico Departments of Labor

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# CORRESPONDENCE

## FAIRLIE TALES

*To the editors:*
Henry Fairlie's insulting appraisal of Democratic hopefuls ("Spare the Rod, Spoil the Party," TNR, April 25) reminds me of an earlier liberal hurling his verbal thunderbolts from Olympus at F.D.R.—John T. Flynn, who actually lived here on earth and played a lousy game of golf. Fairlie's veneration of Roosevelt reminds me that in Albany, and in the 1932 campaign, F.D.R. ranked below many of today's Democrats in vision, experience, and understanding. Any Democrat could have beaten Hoover in 1932, and any Democrat did, just as any Republican leader could have defeated Carter in 1980.

The Roosevelt of the 1932 campaign and the Roosevelt of March 4, 1933, are two completely different men. In the four months following the November 1932 election, the people of our nation began to realize, many for the first time, that our country was in deep and devastating peril. Waves of hysteria swept across the land. Hoover was the devil we knew, and the new President the devil we did not know. Roosevelt learned that the problems he and the people faced were quite unrelated to his 1932 issues. Nearly everyone had believed that recovery was just around the corner, and then, suddenly we realized our mistake. Somewhere in there a statesman was born, and the New Deal with him. I did not read this; I lived it. I was involved as a 40-year-old businessman trying to stave off bankruptcy. Mr. Fairlie's conception of those times is a fairy story.

FRANK A. SIEVERMAN JR.
*Fayette, Alabama*

*To the editors:*
Reading Henry Fairlie's essay made me think of a bizarre inversion of an old saying—in this case, that he would cut off his face to spite his nose.

The nose I speak of is the Democratic Party, and the face is the nation. In other words, Mr. Fairlie would have the country endure another four years of President Reagan in order to "restore" the "soul" of the Party. As sensationalism, Mr. Fairlie's essay works; as thoughtful political commentary it falls flat on its, er, face.

Mr. Fairlie contends that he sees "no particular reason to fear a second Republican term in the White House." From all the available evidence, one could conclude that Mr. Fairlie is a man singularly lacking in fear. The bulk of Mr. Fairlie's essay consists of attacks on the Democratic Presidential candidates and a comparison between our current political situation and that of the 1920s and '30s. First, any political candidate can be smeared in the manner Mr. Fairlie applies to the current crop. Second, to make a direct comparison between 1983 and a period 50 years ago strikes me as just too liberal a use of the imagination. The Democratic Party did not nominate Al Smith in 1928 just to lay the groundwork for Roosevelt. And F.D.R. did not become elected to four terms as President because of a grand scheme of the Democratic Party, but rather because of his own special qualities. Mr. Fairlie makes the horrendous mistake of asserting that if we just hold out for one more term, a "restored" Democratic Party will be assured a long and glorious reign. And nowhere in his entire essay does he present any solid evidence that a Democratic victory in 1984 would be an unmitigated disaster, as he seems to imply.

In 1980 I was disenchanted with Jimmy Carter, voted for John Anderson, and have since come to regret painfully that I did not do everything I could to keep Mr. Carter in office. Even if Mr. Fairlie were right on every point, which he is not, it would still be of overwhelming importance to send Ronald Reagan to a long-overdue retirement.

DAVID L. DENNIE
*Knoxville, Tennessee*

*To the editors:*
After surveying the sad batch of Democratic Presidential candidates, Henry Fairlie concludes that another term for the Republicans might not be so bad ("Spare the Rod, Spoil the Party," TNR, April 25). At least it would give the Democrats a chance to get their act together and, what the heck, four more years of Republican rule probably won't bring the country to ruin.

Fairlie suggests we take as a guide the Democrats' loss in 1928, which paved the way for 1932 and the long-lasting Roosevelt coalition. This historical comparison, however, doesn't inspire confidence in Fairlie's sanguine attitude toward keeping a Republican in the White House. What about the Great Depression?

NANCY P. MCINTYRE
*Washington, D.C.*

## STROUT RENOWN

*To the editors:*
As a twenty-year subscriber to THE NEW REPUBLIC, I have always felt that reading TRB before reading the balance of the magazine was like licking off the frosting before devouring the cake. The afterglow that lingers in my mind from those one thousand columns is that Mr. Strout still has a child-like faith in our nation, a reverence for its history, an awe of its promise, and an amazement that our political system somehow works. In his composition he has always aimed his pen high in order to touch the best that is within us. When E. B. White once wrote that "writing is not a trick of grammar, but an act of faith," he surely must have had TRB's noble and challenging prose in mind.

ED JONES
*Thousand Oaks, California*

*To the editors:*
I have been a subscriber to THE NEW REPUBLIC since I was a freshman in high school in 1962. I have found Richard Strout's wisdom and perspective an invaluable part of my week. I wish to express my appreciation to him and to TNR. Also, I must express my sympathy to his successor, whoever he or she may be. Mr. Strout is truly an "irreplaceable man."

KATHERINE E RYAN
*Van Nuys, California*

## SOUTH AFRICAN SENSITIVITY

*To the editors:*
I am a "white liberal South African" who finally threw up his arms in despair and emigrated to California, where I live with only occasional twinges of guilt at having left my erstwhile compatriots, black and white, to sort out their problems without me. Over the years, I have read numerous articles by non-South Africans, some of

*continued on page 39*



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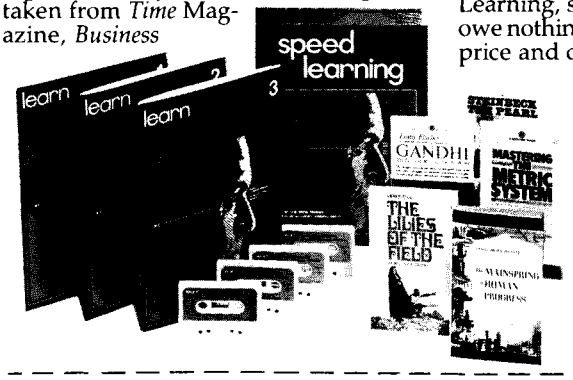


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FROM WASHINGTON

## CHOICES IN CENTRAL AMERICA

When the President spoke to Congress last Wednesday night about Central America, he was talking about a crisis partly of his own making. For at the heart of the Administration's policy in that region is a revisionist history of an earlier, more distant war, and a determination to vindicate the revisionism. United Nations Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick invokes the failures of "liberals" and "lobbies of the left" to account for the American defeat in Vietnam—and to argue that it must not be permitted to happen again in El Salvador. But she never explains how and why the Vietnam War could have been won even if its opponents had cheerfully supported it. She suggests that opponents of the Vietnam War assumed the Viet Cong would "establish a broad-based government or a Socialist democracy." In reality, responsible critics opposed the war not because they liked Ho Chi Minh and the Communists, but because no reasonable effort could avert their victory. To prolong the killing only added to the sum total of suffering; the character of the Communist regime would have been the same whether the end had come in 1971 or 1975 or even later. Similarly, the issue in Central America is not the comparative morality of Soviet- and American-sponsored repression, but the practicality of sustaining governments that offer the vast majority of their people little if any hope for change. The Reagan Administration sees only two possible futures for Central America: the status quo of economic injustice and political violence, or revolutions which will be more efficient about repression, but at least promise a bit less random killing and a bit more economic justice. If this really is the only choice, the status quo is inevitably the losing side. Maybe that's why the Administration's arguments for escalation in Central America often seem like the reenactment of a faded drama in a new theater, with the players hoping the audience has forgotten that this script ends badly.

In fact, El Salvador may already be irretrievable. Even Administration officials now say so privately, Leslie Gelb reports in *The New York Times*. Gelb quotes a State Department spokesman who insists, "We are not prepared to abandon El Salvador at all, and certainly not before the 1984 elections"—another, no-so-happy echo of the Vietnam era. After already sending $650 million in military and economic aid, the Administration cannot estimate how much more will be needed for how long. The Salvadoran army is rent with internal strife, increasingly dependent on teenage conscripts, steadily more depleted of morale. Only a quarter of its men ever actually fight.

Some opponents of Administration policy calculate that they had better support increased military aid to El Salvador, since the government there will fall anyway and liberals must avoid becoming scapegoats in a debate over who lost Central America. But there are genuine stakes here. Can we afford to do nothing, to take no military steps at all until at last even Mexico is in danger? No—which is why the critics need to shape an alternative to the choice between an endless American retreat and a doomed American alliance with repression.

This will require that the United States put itself on the side of hope, all over Latin America. This may even mean military aid, but not as a sole solution or as a prop for unpopular dictatorships. During the Alliance for

*continued on page 40*


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THE NEW REPUBLIC
MAY 16, 1983

# POLICY BY SPASM

Reports from Russia say that in the matter of American policy toward the Soviet Union the Andropov government has adopted a "wait-and-see" attitude. Mr. Andropov cannot be blamed. The American public has adopted a "wait-and-see" attitude, too. It has no alternative. Ideological exaltation aside, nothing in this Administration may be mistaken for a consistent and seriously considered policy toward the Russians. Instead this Administration has been, like Isabel Archer, a little on the side of everything.

In recent weeks we have been treated to a particularly healthy helping of the kind of rodomontade that passes in the Reagan government for a foreign policy. There was, for example, the Soviet cheating controversy. It appears that the Soviets tested a missile on February 8. This test may have violated SALT II, which restricts its signatories to the development of no more than one new type of intercontinental ballistic missile. The Soviets say that all they did in February was explore a modified SS-13, which SALT II allows. A panel of officials from State and Defense, however, concluded that the Russians were really exploring a second new type of missile. The President was persuaded. He denounced the Russians.

So far no surprises. The Russians characteristically aggrandize their arsenal, and Ronald Reagan characteristically calls them to account. A week later, however, the President went what conservatives would call "soft." As Hedrick Smith wrote in *The New York Times*, he decided "not to make public" the charges that had already been made public. (This is the kind of circumlocution that is responsible for cynicism about government.) It appeared, a week later, that "hard and fast evidence" was lacking, and Mr. Reagan observed judiciously that "if you can't get the kind of courtroom evidence you need, then you can't make the charge of violation." Needless to say, this respect for due process in international relations will get him into a lot of trouble; the writings of Lenin, according to some of the President's supporters, are evidence enough of what Communists do. Mr. Reagan himself has occasionally subscribed to this view. For his scrupulousness in this latest affair we commend him. Perhaps a sincere desire to see a success in arms control has tightened his tongue.

Of course it is entirely possible that the Soviets did violate SALT II. The problem is that United States never ratified SALT II. We recall this not out of kindness to the Russians, which, our readers know, is not a sentiment of which we can be accused. We recall it because we are amused to see the people who opposed SALT II honor it in the Soviet breach. The interagency panel that pilloried the Soviets to the President was co-chaired by Richard Perle, the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Policy, who was more responsible than anybody else for the destruction of SALT II in the Senate. But now, take note, the treaty has its uses. Indeed, we may be attending at the birth of a new argument for arms control—that any agreement is good if the Soviets can be said to violate it. If there are no agreements, there can be no allegations, and if there are no allegations, there can be no aggravation of tensions, and if there is no aggravation of tensions, the will of the free world may falter.

The observance of SALT II by the superpowers, despite the failure to ratify it, is one of the most significant achievements of East-West relations in this period. This, despite the Soviets' history of hiding behind arms control loopholes. It is the letter and not the spirit of arms treaties to which the Soviets feel bound. Still, the Standing Consultative Commission established by SALT I has successfully satisfied American grievances until now; the Administration's suspicions about the Soviet test in February, when our intelligence-gathering machinery appears to have been functioning at less than full capacity, should be brought before this commission, and ended there.

The spasms that characterize the Reagan Administration's security policy toward the Russians characterize its economic policy toward the Russians, too. In this field the spasms are shorter and follow in more rapid succession. On April 22 the President announced that he was ending the ban on negotiations over a grain agreement with the Soviet Union. The ban was part of the President's re-



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sponse to the Soviet suffocation of Poland. The lifting of the ban, he said, was "to reaffirm our reliability as a supplier of grain" to the Russians. Not exactly one of the primary objectives of American foreign policy, that; perhaps the President is acting on his options papers in ascending order. Then, on April 23—that is, the next day—an Administration official admonished Western European diplomats about their commercial relationships with the Soviet Union. Laurence J. Brady of the Department of Commerce warned the members of the European Economic Community that their failure to meet American restrictions on the export of high technology eastward would result in an "isolationist reaction" in the United States, by which he meant that the United States would "reconsider military commitments to Western Europe." If Mr. Brady was implying that we would reconsider the deployment of the unpopular Pershings, he may be responsible for a boom in high-tech trade.

The statecraft of the current American government is, shall we say, contrapuntal. A proudly interventionist Administration threatens isolationism. It insists on a nuclear umbrella over Europe even as it warns Europe of a loss of American military support. It demands that its allies make economic war on Russia even as it makes economic peace. What is going on here? Some of it, no doubt, is the domination of anti-communism by capitalism, which is an ancient truth about the political culture of the Reagan period. It remains a feeble excuse. The anti-Sovietism of this Administration is all passion and no policy. Its proposals for arms control are all policy and no passion. Soon it will be the hour to start writing the history of the Reagan Administration, and the honest historian may conclude that in the matter of its relations with the Russians—the President's controlling obsession and the highest objective of his foreign policy—this will have been a time of slogans and drift.

## Syria In Shadows

One of the most deleterious realities of international politics is that "the attention of the world" is determined by the circumstances of reporting. "The attention of the world," after all, does exist, and it is the scourge of scoundrel states, who understand that such things as repression and aggression are best conducted in the dark, where they cannot be completely seen. Consider, for example, Syria, which has emerged as the source of most of the mischief in the Middle East in recent months. It has successfully managed to stay out of the light, and so prevent certain connections from being drawn and the full picture of its policies from being painted. To wit: that the Islamic group that blew up the American embassy in Beirut is under the protection of Syria. That the man who murdered Issam Sartawi in Lisbon was in the employ of Syria. That the vast majority of foreign soldiers in Lebanon—fully twice as many as Israel's—are Syria's. That the most destabilizing weapons in the region, the SAM-5s that the Soviets have exported for the first time, are in Syria.

In short, it all amounts to something. Why has nobody taken note? The media, we understand, cannot, because the media is not welcome in Syria, which is one way of preventing bad publicity. Reporters do not like to report that there is a story that they cannot report; they go elsewhere. The American government, however, is another matter. It possesses all the information it needs about Syria's intrigues, but it is strangely silent. Syria does not seem to be high on its list of culprits in the Middle East. This is yet another failure of its failing Mideast policy. The Administration could communicate to the Soviet Union, for example, that it views its client's persistent provocations gravely. And it could communicate to the Saudis and the Jordanians, who are already on the other side from Syria in the Iran-Iraq War, that they are being played for suckers by the Syrians, whose presence north of Beirut and enthusiasm for terrorism stand stoutly in the way of a solution of both the Lebanese and Palestinian problems. The United States may not have much leverage over Syria, but it claims to have it with nations that do have leverage over Syria, and that are conceding Syria leverage over the entire peace process. Will somebody in Washington, then, please throw a light on Damascus? We succeeded in making Libya an international issue. Syria should be one, too.

## Notebook

□ THE NEW REPUBLIC did all right this year at the annual dinner of the White House Correspondents Association. Bill Hogan, Diane Kiesel, and Alan Green were awarded the Worth Bingham Prize for 1982 for "The New Slush Fund Scandal" (TNR, August 30, 1982), an investigation of how members of the House of Representatives use campaign funds to buy everything from theater tickets to designer dresses. The prize, established in memory of the late Robert Worth Bingham of the *Louisville Courier-Journal*, has been given annually since 1966 "to honor newspaper or magazine reporting that investigates and analyzes situations of national significance in the Washington political community where the public is being ill-served." And Richard L. Strout—our TRB until last month and now a contributing editor—received the Aldo Beckman Memorial Award, established three years ago in memory of the late Washington bureau chief of the *Chicago Tribune*, for "repeated excellence in White House coverage over a long period." Mr. Strout got a standing ovation, by the way, but this should not be held against him.

□ FIFTY YEARS AGO IN THE NEW REPUBLIC: "For how shall a man pass the day? The workless walk about restlessly but without hurry. Most of them have been without jobs for a



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solid year; many for two years. They rest in the parks, in the crowded central squares, spectators of the city's unreeling film. Lacking small necessaries, they learn after some inward resistance to gather cigar butts, cigarette ends, as well as discarded newspapers, which they read at great length. Finally, at least half of them, no matter how respectable their pasts may have been, begin to 'ask' during the day, that is, to beg. An army of panhandlers estimated at 6,000 now covers the city. Then, in the afternoon, from all quarters of the town, there is the slow return of the thousands of idle, rotting drones toward the bread and flop-house lines." ("The Other Nation," by Matthew Josephson, May 17, 1933.)

A problematic Pulitzer for the 'Post.'

# FALSE DISTINCTION

THE PULITZER Prizes for journalism have been announced, and once again there are questions about whether one of the winners did not more properly deserve the prize for fiction. Once again, too, the shadow falls on a reporter for *The Washington Post*, Loren Jenkins, who shared the award for his foreign reporting from Lebanon with Thomas L. Friedman of *The New York Times*. And in that is something of a story.

In a self-congratulatory advertisement in its own pages on April 19, the *Post* announced, quoting from the Pulitzer citation, that Jenkins had received the prize "for his coverage of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon and its aftermath." Well, Jenkins did not exactly cover the invasion; in fact, he did not actually arrive in Lebanon until August 9, more than two months after the war began, and barely a week before the arrival of foreign troops and the beginning of the P.L.O. withdrawal from Beirut. The Israeli invasion was, of course, covered for the *Post*, but by Nora Boustany, David Ottaway, William Branigan, William Claiborne, Edward Cody, and Jonathan Randal, the paper's senior foreign correspondent. Their tendentious accounts provoked dismay and disbelief, and not only in the pages of THE NEW REPUBLIC. The contrast between the character and quality of the reportage in the *Times* and the *Post* could not have been sharper. According to Robert C. Christopher, secretary of the Pulitzer Prize Board, the *Post*'s editors did not submit the work of any of their front-line correspondents whose excellence and truthfulness they were defending all summer. Perhaps their critics had persuaded them.

In nominating Loren Jenkins, the *Post* offered up the least controversial of its Beirut correspondents. It also shrewdly and simultaneously provided the jurors with an opportunity not to let the *Times* walk away with the Lebanon honors; three out of four newspaper executives on the international reporting jury, and seven out of eleven executives (plus one *Post* columnist) on the Pulitzer board represent papers that use the *Post* service. The competition was a classic conflict-of-interest situation. (The jurors had passed on a third nominee, Rod Nordland of the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, for his coverage of war and famine in East Asia, and chose Jenkins instead.) Christopher explained, and one juror confirmed, that Friedman had gotten the prize particularly for his comprehensive and meticulous reporting of complicated events like the Shabra and Shatila massacre; Jenkins got his "for skill with fast-breaking news under pressure of deadline. Jenkins, we thought, did rather better than Friedman at that."

YET FRIEDMAN did much better with the facts, even under deadline pressure. Jenkins's September 18 account of the massacre, for example, pinned primary responsibility on Major Haddad's troops. Jenkins admitted that "confusion surrounded the precise identity of the killers," but gave great credence to the fact that "a number of survivors had identified them as belonging to the units under the control of Saad Haddad, a cashiered Lebanese army major whose men have been funded and trained by Israel." Only further down in the story did Jenkins add that "Israeli soldiers stationed around the camp and other survivors said the killers also included members of the Phalangist militia. . . ." Jenkins went on to write, echoing some survivors, the P.L.O., and some Phalange officers trying to divert blame from themselves, that "this correspondent saw men wearing the uniforms of both Gemayel's and Haddad's units in Shatila." With his own eyes, then. The next day, in a piece emphasizing Israeli culpability for the massacres, Jenkins credits accounts from what he calls "reliable witnesses" fixing responsibility on "two separate, Israeli-supported Christian militias—that of cashiered Lebanon army Major Saad Haddad, Israel's surrogate in Southern Lebanon, and members of the late president-elect Bashir Gemayel's Phalangist Lebanese Forces." A pattern begins to emerge: in both accounts the Haddad presence is mentioned first and with near certainty, each time with an adjectival phrase reiterating his subservience to Israel. A subtle case is also made for those Phalangists who happened to be at the camps not being under discipline, but perhaps there acting as an independent and uncommanded rump. On National Public Radio's "All Things Considered" the following day, Jenkins was more explicit. When asked if he knew who committed the atrocities, he responded, "It is very clear. . . . Major Haddad and his group have come up from the South. And you have a group of what looks like a breakaway group from the major Christian militia, the Lebanese Forces . . . it seems that their group with [Bashir Gemayel's] death that he had held control of, has now broken loose and have become laws unto themselves." Does Jenkins believe that only "breakaway" Phalangists engage in massacre? If he does, he knows little of Lebanon. Jenkins has much more information about the involvement of Haddad's units:

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*N.P.R.:* How many of Major Haddad's men is estimated?

*Jenkins:* It is estimated two battalions which could be anywhere from up to between [sic] a thousand and fifteen hundred. They came up through the afternoon, they come up from the South. . . .

Notice the precision, which is the best cover for ignorance.

Alas, none of this is true. The Israeli commission that investigated the massacre concluded that "no unit of [Haddad's] force had crossed the Awali River that week. . . . No force under the command of Major Haddad took part in the Phalangist's operation in the camps, or took part in the massacre. . . ." No one has charged that the Kahan inquiry protected Haddad's reputation while exposing some of Israel's top officers to shame. But Friedman's dispatches cite what he calls "circumstantial evidence" indicating that there may have been Haddad men involved. He had the professional compunction, however, to explain why the evidence may be misleading. One instance: "Haddad uniforms lack the Phalangist insignia on the left breast pocket." Does it follow that any militiaman without "Lebanese Forces" stitched on his uniform is a member of Haddad's militia? Clearly not. There is a telling contrast between what Friedman learns from uniforms and what Jenkins learns from them. Jenkins shoddily shores up his own preference for Haddad as the perpetrator of the murders: "Haddad's forces often have used the uniforms of the Lebanese forces from East Beirut in an attempt to link them to his own actions." The implication is clear: the Phalange uniforms seen in Sabra and Shatila may be Haddad disguises. Clearly Jenkins is not a man to be fooled by appearances. "If the reporter has poisoned our imagination by his version of the truth," wrote Karl Kraus, "he brings us back to reality by his lies."

One reason that some honest survivors may have assumed that there were Haddad men among the killers was that some of them were called by Shiite Moslem names and spoke with Southern Lebanese accents. But it has long been known that there are people from Southern Lebanon in the Christian Maronite Phalange, and that, in the Byzantia of Lebanese politics, there are some Shiites among them. In general, however, the Maronite Christians and Shiites have long been at odds, coming together in recent years primarily in their joint hatred for the P.L.O. Moreover, Haddad's forces and the Phalange have also long been at odds—even at fighting odds—and fought more than once in the days immediately before the massacre. Recall also that a sticking point between Beirut and Jerusalem over Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon is the political survival of Major Haddad and his militia in a Phalange-dominated country. In any case, the history of this relationship, if nothing else, made it highly unlikely that the Phalange and Haddad's Free Lebanon militia would have cooperated in so complex and risky an enterprise as the massacres, done, so to speak, in memory of Bashir Gemayal.

For the *Post*, however, none of this history is a problem. Despite the fact that 60 percent of Haddad's militia is Shia (Friedman says "roughly half are Shiites from the South"), it is *Post* doctrine that his forces are Christian. Even the P.L.O.'s own *Journal of Palestine Studies* refers to the militia as Shia. It is not easy to understand why the *Post* clings to this mistake. Suffice it to say that in all of his pointing the finger of guilt at Haddad for Sabra and Shatila, Jenkins failed to note the reality about Haddad's Shiite Moslems. It would have complicated a simple morality play about Christian murderers and Palestinian victims, which is also Randal's stock theme. (Haddad himself, by the way, is not a Maronite, but a Greek Catholic, and between these two communities there is not exactly Christian love.)

In its cases and its details, then, Jenkins's reporting fits in neatly with the *Post* line on the Middle East. One reason why Washingtonians were confused about the duration of the Israeli siege of Beirut is that they had been told in *Post* article after *Post* article, as early as July 4, by Randal and others, that Arafat had agreed to withdraw. One reason these same citizens were surprised to find that King Hussein would not dine at Ronald Reagan's negotiating table was because they were told—and this, too, in contrast to what readers of the *Times* learned from Tom Friedman's dispatches—that Arafat was about to sign on. It was a nice story while it lasted. So also in the spirit of the paper, Jenkins obscured the complex and not painless truths about Israeli responsibility in order to assert, as he did on the radio, the simple falsehood that "There is no doubt in my mind that Israel aided and abetted the whole operation."

ABOUT THE ISRAELIS he will believe anything. In an article on August 11, he recounts an interview with Bassam Abu Sherif, a senior member of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, "who was partially blinded by an Israeli letter-bomb in the 1970s." Jenkins isn't sure when the mishap occurred, but he is sure that the letter-bomb was Israeli. Did it have an Israeli return address? Who told him the missive came from Israel? Mr. Abu Sharif? Some other P.L.O. functionary? Why would Jenkins report as a simple fact what has to be an unsubstantiated allegation? I spoke to two reporters long resident in Beirut who had interviewed Abu Sherif several times and who had no idea that he was "partially blinded." One said he had blown off some of his fingers. The other said, "P.F.L.P. people play with dangerous toys."

Jenkins's animus to Israel is nowhere made more clear than in an interview with his hometown *Aspen Times* on October 7. According to Stewart Dobson, Jenkins believes that "what created this culture of violence" in Lebanon is "Western guilt over the murder and torment of the Jewish people during World War II." Pretty sophisticated. Jenkins must believe, then, that Lebanon's troubles started with the establishment of Israel. In any case, the Palestinians are now "the Jews of the '80's." Jenkins also complains about U.S. aid to Israel, which "is living entirely on the dole. It gets me angry when I'm getting divebombed." He went on to say that Arab nations want friendly relations with us, but that they cannot turn to the United



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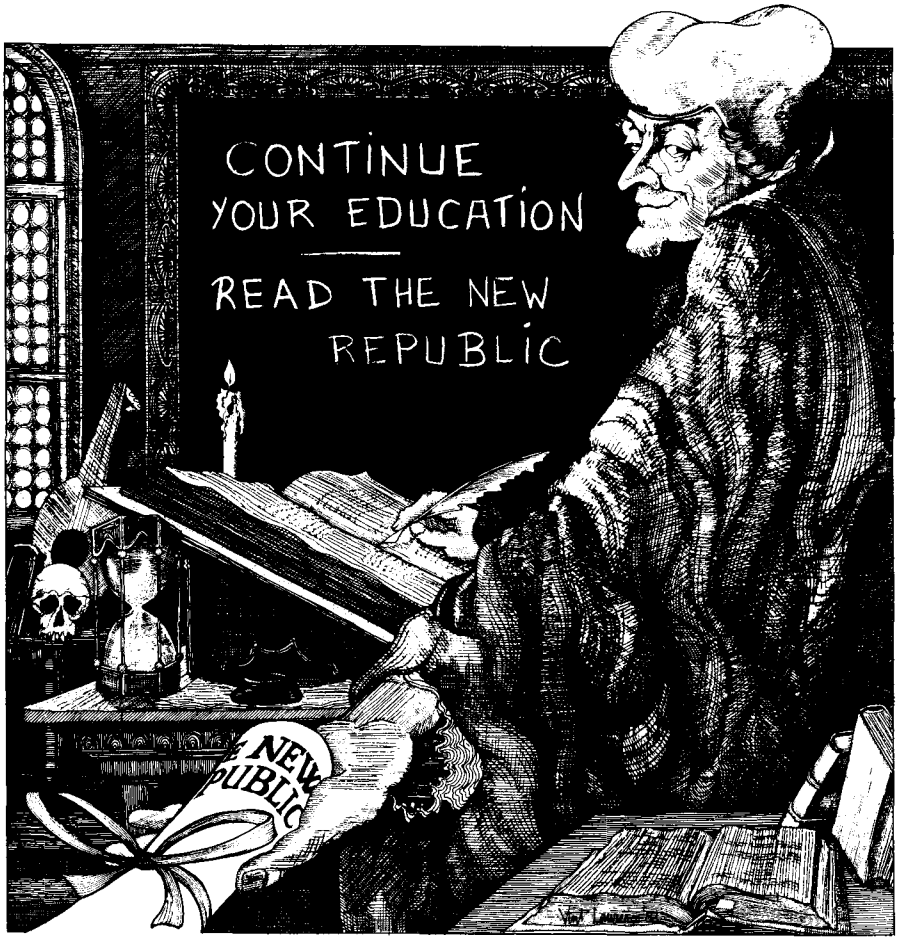


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States because of its staunch support of Israel. Committed to Israel and Lebanon's Christians, "We are once more allied to a beast."

Everybody has a right to his opinions. A newspaper has a right to have someone who believes such simplifications on its foreign reportorial staff (and someone who, after more than three years in the region, knows virtually no Arabic), though there are newspapers that would not act on that right. But readers should know what attitudes structured Jenkins's desperately partisan and largely erroneous reconstruction of the massacre. Two weeks after the massacre, and five days after Friedman's long and detailed narrative in the *Times*, Jenkins finally did his own wrap-up, this time fixing the entire blame for the actual massacre on leaders of the Phalange. By then this was indisputable. Nor was there anything about Israel aiding and abetting. As for the thousand or fifteen hundred Haddad men, they were now merely "a handful of men spotted who appeared to belong to the militia of renegade Lebanese army major Saad Haddad, Israel's surrogate," etc. In the end, like everybody else in the U.S. press corps, Jenkins corrected himself, though others not so given to ideological premonitions were less in need of correction. But he got his award for what he wrote in the beginning, fast and on deadline. He got the story, all right, but he got it mostly wrong. It is a shame that Thomas Friedman's Pulitzer should be compromised by the company he must keep.

**MARTIN PERETZ**

A media Springtime for Hitler.

# DEAR DIARIES

*Hamburg*

WATCHING my old Oxford professor, Hugh Trevor-Roper (now Lord Dacre), under the relentless glare of the television lights at the *Stern* press conference here was a strange experience. It was rather like watching a Victorian gentleman trying to backpeddle on a penny farthing. Against the odds, he kept his balance. Of the "Hitler Diaries" he had written confidently in *The Times* of London on April 23, "I am now satisfied they are authentic." Now he is not satisfied they are authentic. "I regret," he told us, "that normal methods of historical verification were to some extent sacrificed to the requirements of a journalistic scoop." Here the historian Hugh Trevor-Roper (Lord Dacre) was presumably also criticizing the director of Times Newspapers, Ltd., Lord Dacre (Hugh Trevor-Roper), on whose weighty recommendation Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation bought the British and Commonwealth rights to the diaries for $400,000.

The case for authenticity still rests on the tentative testimony of two historians, Trevor-Roper and the sharp-eyed Gerhard Weinberg, who, commissioned by the News Corporation and *Newsweek*, respectively, each spent half a day examining the journals in a Swiss bank. The case rests, too, on the evidence of three handwriting experts who were given small samples from the archives and a chemical test on paper from two volumes. It rests, finally, on the seeming impossibility of a perfect forgery on such a scale. But the last point can only be given its full weight when the diaries, and the other documents and memorabilia apparently found with them, have been carefully examined by a team of specialists. Given all the internal and external evidence, they could almost certainly reach a convincing verdict. Why has this not happened? Why, indeed, has *Stern* not shown them to a single independent German historian?

One of the answers is simple: money. The whole presentation of the story by the Hamburg photo magazine has been steeped in a grotesque kind of show business. I am irresistibly reminded of Mel Brooks's film, *The Producers*, and its Busby Berkeley-style musical number, "Springtime for Hitler (and Ger-ma-nee)." The Hamburg air is heavy with "undisclosed sums," but informed rumor puts *Stern*'s investment in the story at around $4 million. If it is lucky, it will make a great deal more than that out of the diaries, although the Free State of Bavaria seems poised to claim the copyright as Adolph Hitler's legal heir.

AS I ARRIVED at Heathrow Airport for the Hamburg flight on Sunday evening, the first thing I heard was an American voice saying, "They're asking us $3 million for them." The newspaper to which that voice belonged apparently had second bite at the American rights, *Newsweek* having shrewdly declined the apple after pressing out the juice for its cover story. Rupert Murdoch, however, has bitten deep. Cynics say the newspaper impresarios have nothing to lose: either the diaries are "the biggest literary discovery since the Dead Sea Scrolls," or they are a "massive forgery dwarfing into insignificance the notorious sting played on billionaire Howard Hughes by Clifford Irving," as *The Sunday Times* of London puts it, with characteristic British understatement.

If the hype is grotesque, the methods employed by the *Stern* reporter who "found" the diaries are, to say the least, suspect. This Gerd Heidemann, who, we are told by *Stern*, looked up "with shining eyes" at the Waffen-SS men who taught him to shoot in 1945, began his quest by buying Clifford Irving's yacht. With one of the old Nazis who came to visit him on board, SS-General Karl Wolff, he flew to South America where he interviewed "very many prominent SS leaders." They agreed to speak with Heidemann, SS-General Wolff explained, because they knew "that I would not denounce them." How loyal, how noble. But surely, as an enlighted journalist, Herr Heidemann, will now reveal what he knows of the whereabouts of these Nazi criminals, so that they, like Klaus Barbie, the butcher of Lyon, with whom he also spoke, may at last be brought to justice for their crimes against humanity? He will not. Instead, he will courageously stand by that high



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journalistic principle, "protecting your sources." What a grand code of honor! I suspect that if he had met Adolph Hitler himself in the jungles of Bolivia, he would have selflessly "protected his source"—at least until *Stern* had rushed out its world exclusive. As *Stern* editors played to the skies their own remarkable contribution to contemporary history, the stink of hypocrisy permeated the room.

Until the diaries are handed over to the professional historians, who should have had them long ago, Heidemann's credibility is crucial. There is one independent witness for the fact that the airplane which crashed in the Erz mountains in April 1945 contained important personal papers of Adolph Hitler. But we have only Heidemann's word for the fact that the papers which were in that plane are those which *Stern* will now present to the world. About the path they took from there to Zurich, as about his sources, his lips are sealed. It was apparently Heidemann who led Trevor-Roper to understand, and to write in *The Times* of London and the *New York Post* that the link between the airplane and the bank consisted of one Wermacht officer who recovered the metal cases from the plane in April 1945, hid them "in a hayloft," and sold them to Herr Heidemann from 1981 to 1983. "Only later," Trevor-Roper told the press conference, "I found that I had been—er, er—that I misunderstood the information given me there" [in Zurich]. Fill in the blank and you may read: "I had been misinformed." To add to the confusion, Heidemann has given two different versions of his story. In one, "a German officer" initially secured the cases in 1945. In the other, "the Russians" secured them, a not insignificant difference.

TREVOR-ROPER was impressed by the diversity of material in the newly discovered archives. He mentioned, for example, a third volume of *Mein Kampf*, which Heidemann told him about, and poems by Hitler. Right-wing historian David Irving made a dramatic intervention to say that if these documents were in these archives, then he knew where they came from, and the source was a collection which contained obvious forgeries. His story is corroborated by a highly reputable scholar, Professor Eberhard Jäckel, who says he was offered pages of Hitler's diaries and the alleged third volume of *Mein Kampf* long before the date when Heidemann claims to have found the diaries. Medical evidence also suggests that Hitler, his right arm damaged by the July 20, 1944, assassination attempt and then afflicted by trembling palsy, was hardly capable of writing in the remarkably consistent, though deteriorating, hand which these diaries reveal. I have not seen a single blot or correction on any of the pages so far reproduced.

As to the content of the diaries, so far we have seen nothing which Hitler *could not* have written. We know already from other sources that Hitler was irritated by Goebbels's love affairs. It is plausible that he was fearful and contemptuous of Himmler, respectful of Chamberlain. Hitler is credited with a strange remark on the day after *Kristallnacht*: "It won't do for our economy to have millions and millions' worth destroyed by a few hotheads, in glass alone." Was Hitler really a man to worry about broken glass? Or could this have been an awkward attempt at preparing his self-exculpation for posterity. At the same time, we have seen nothing that only he could have written, and a forger steeped in the period could not. As the venerable historian Professor Fritz Fischer comments, so far the diaries reveal no new motives for Hitler's actions.

*Stern* claims that much of the history of Nazi Germany will have to be rewritten in the light of the diaries. If they are genuine, this is, on the evidence presented so far, folderol. We know that Hitler would have been writing for posterity, so it would not be surprising to find the diaries full of lies and distortions like that absurd comment on the *Kristallnacht*. They may shed new light on a few incidents, notably Rudolph Hess's wild flight to Britain in May 1941. They may modify our picture of Hitler himself, and his "court," although we know much about that already. But all the historians I have talked with agree that the diaries will not lead us to revise our picture of Nazi Germany in any essentials. If they are genuine they should certainly be published, for the West German public is mature enough not to plant another Hitler myth in this literary dungheap. Yet it is hard to avoid the conclusion that the only person for whom the reception of the diaries is really a triumph is Adolph Hitler.

**TIMOTHY GARTON ASH**

Timothy Garton Ash writes about German and European affairs for *The Spectator*.

The S.I. and U.S. in Central America.

# MIRROR IMAGES

WHEN the Reagan Administration first started drawing geopolitical lines in the Central American dust, many Americans looked abroad for an alternative approach. The Socialist International, the global association of Social Democratic parties led by Willy Brandt, former Chancellor of West Germany, seemed to offer one. Instead of pointing to the Soviet Union and Cuba as the sources of the problem, the S.I. blamed decades of oppression and injustice. In El Salvador the S.I. proposed negotiation; in Nicaragua it offered the young revolutionaries the benefit of the doubt rather than the short end of a big stick.

A year ago, as the Reagan Administration was celebrating the big turnout at the polls in El Salvador, the S.I. condemned "the so-called elections." The Administration struck back in a formal statement, calling on the S.I. to



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"show more balance and objectivity" and "to distinguish itself from the totalitarian left." The National Security Council met shortly after that exchange, and decided, according to a memo leaked to *The New York Times* last month, on "a more active diplomatic campaign to turn around Mexico and Social Democrats in Europe." Emissaries were sent from Washington to meet with S.I. leaders. Most recently, William Luers, former U.S. Ambassador to Venezuela, and Carl Gershman, an aide to Jeane Kirkpatrick, toured Europe and Latin America to talk to S.I. leaders about the Administration's policy.

The Socialist International Congress met in Portugal from April 7 to 10, and its resolution on Central America shows that the chasm has not been bridged. The S.I. reiterated its "solidarity" with the left in El Salvador and with Nicaragua and Grenada, and strongly condemned "all the attempts made by U.S. agencies to destabilize" the two governments. The S.I. encouraged negotiations within El Salvador and between Honduras and Nicaragua. The resolution's villain is not the United States per se (the S.I. "supports those forces in the U.S." that "oppose the policies of massive military assistance to the repressive regimes"), it's "the Reagan Administration."

Be that as it may, the spears the S.I. used to aim at the Carter Administration were almost as sharp as the ones tossed at Reagan today. In March 1980, the S.I. declared its support for Puerto Rican independence, attacked "North American imperialism" for "backtracking on the Panama Canal Treaties," and denounced "the negative and backward policy of the U.S." toward the Nicaraguan revolution—even though Jimmy Carter was expending scarce political capital to obtain aid for Nicaragua at the time. Carter Administration officials asked themselves the same question then that their successors are asking now: to the extent that the S.I. matters, is it helping or hurting democracy in the region?

THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL traces its roots to Karl Marx's first International of 1864, but the modern S.I. was launched at a Congress of European Social Democratic parties in Frankfurt in 1951. At this meeting, the parties condemned the international Communist movement as "the instrument of a new imperialism," rejected capitalism, and pledged to pursue a "third way" that would promote "social justice within and between nations." The S.I.'s latest and liveliest incarnation dates from 1976, when it elected Willy Brandt its president. Brandt pushed the movement beyond Europe, seeking allies and affiliates in the Third World. The S.I. now has fifty full member parties, though the eighteen West European parties remain the most influential.

The influence of the S.I. in Latin America grew rapidly. Brandt built on the contacts and experience of his own German Social Democratic Party's political foundation, the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, which had been working to promote social democracy in the area for two decades. And as former Venezuelan President Carlos Andrés Pérez explained to me, "We [Latin American democratic leaders] were reaching to Europe to help balance the influence of the U.S." The two continents touched. Today some of Latin America's most articulate and forceful democratic spokesmen—Pérez, former Costa Rican President Daniel Oduber Quirós, former Jamaican Prime Minister Michael Manley, and Santo Domingo Mayor José Francisco Peña Gómez—are active in the S.I., helping to guide its policy toward Central America. The United States has to take the S.I. seriously, if only because member parties govern in a dozen countries, including France, Sweden, the Dominican Republic, and Costa Rica. The new Socialist Prime Minister of Spain, Felipe González, promises to play an important role in Latin America.

In 1978, as part of its effort to expand membership, the S.I. admitted a tiny political party from El Salvador called the National Revolutionary Movement (M.N.R.), led by a gentle lawyer called Guillermo Ungo. "No one imagined the trouble that would cause the S.I.," a leading European Social Democrat told me four years later. The M.N.R. has led the S.I. on a rocky political journey, eventually joining a most undemocratic guerrilla coalition. The United States watched in frustration as the S.I. and its Christian Democratic counterpart, the Union of Christian Democratic Movements, followed, rather than led, their Salvadoran party affiliates. By transplanting a European-style competition among democratic parties onto a war-torn landscape, the two international organizations made it harder, not easier, for a more democratic option to emerge in El Salvador.

SIMILARLY, the S.I. was drawn into the revolution in Nicaragua by its new ties with the pro-Sandinista leadership of Venezuela, Panama, and Costa Rica. After the Sandinistas took power, the S.I. sought to cement its credibility with the young revolutionaries by stressing their common "anti-imperialism" and by offering itself as an alternative to the Communist bloc. In 1980, in a bow to the conditioned paranoia of the guerrilla leadership, the S.I. established a high-level Committee for the Defense of the Nicaraguan Revolution. S.I. leaders privately informed the United States that this was a device to hold the Nicaraguans to their pledges of pluralism, a mixed economy, and nonalignment.

There is a consensus in the S.I. that the Reagan Administration's confrontationist tactics are playing into the hands of the extremists, who are moving Nicaragua closer to a Cuban-Soviet model, but there are differences on how to respond. The German and French parties often find themselves mediating between the Scandinavians and Dutch, who still regard the Sandinistas as the "forces of the future" in Central America, and the Latin Americans, Spanish, and Portuguese, who are disillusioned about Nicaragua's increasingly totalitarian direction. There are a few in the S.I. who believe, like Jan Ziegler, a Social Democratic member of the Swiss Parliament, that the Cuban revolution is "an island of light . . . the cause of all free men." But more would probably agree with Rui Mateus, International Secretary of the Portuguese Socialist Party,



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who made this acid remark: "Clearly, some Europeans who thrive on revolutions in faraway places have a desperate need to appear 'romantically progressive' in their domestic scene while unfortunately denying their own audiences the benefits of their generous nature."

Although the United States and the S.I. share the goal of promoting democracy and development in Central America, their strategies have been markedly different. Indeed, they seem to be mirror images of each other. The S.I. encourages negotiations with leftist guerrillas in El Salvador, but not with rightist guerrillas in Nicaragua. It condemns El Salvador for having faulty elections, but defends Nicaragua and Grenada even though they have no elections at all. The Reagan Administration encourages dialogue between the government and the opposition in Nicaragua, but discourages it in El Salvador. It condemns subversion in El Salvador, but encourages it in Nicaragua. The S.I. noisily condemns virtually every right-wing regime, even democratic ones like Colombia and Honduras, but can't seem to bring itself to criticize leftist regimes out loud. (What reservations it does signal are so obliquely expressed that it takes a political magnifying glass to detect them. For example, an S.I. statement that "we support the aims of the Nicaraguan revolution, democracy, pluralism, nonalignment, and a mixed economy" is cited as an instance of criticism.) The S.I. insists that "quiet diplomacy" works better with leftist regimes, which, of course, is precisely what the Administration says about rightist regimes.

The increasingly confrontational turn of recent U.S. policy gave the S.I. a fresh opportunity to occupy the middle ground at its meeting in Portugal. It fumbled that opportunity. What could it have done?

IN NICARAGUA, the United States long ago lost both leverage and credibility with the Sandinista government. The S.I. still has some of both; the Sandinistas sent a high-level delegation to Portugal. But leverage is worse than useless if it's not used. The S.I. has begun to legitimize a regime that rejects the S.I.'s values; indeed, it helps justify the militarism and totalitarianism of the revolution. The time has come for the S.I. to condemn—publicly—not only U.S. destabilization efforts but also the Sandinistas' slide toward communism. The S.I. has rebuffed legitimate opposition parties in Nicaragua, condemning them ultimately to exile. The time has come to defend them, not the Sandinistas, and to promote negotiations and elections there.

The S.I. has been right about negotiations but wrong about elections in Central America. If the S.I. is to continue to claim that democracy is its objective, then it needs to affirm that genuine elections are the best way to test the will of the people. To argue that Central America is not ready for free elections is to engage in the worst form of cultural imperialism.

In El Salvador, the S.I. has never explicitly said that the aim of negotiations should be to establish conditions that would permit genuine elections. If the S.I. does say that publicly, and gets its Salvadoran member, the M.N.R., to agree to it, the Reagan Administration and the Salvadoran government would be hard pressed to keep insisting on their disingenuous precondition—that the left should disarm before negotiations can begin.

The S.I.'s criticism of right-wing regimes in the hemisphere will lack credibility until the same standards are applied to Cuba. And if the S.I. were serious about supporting democracy in the Caribbean, it would not have accepted the only nondemocratic political party in the eastern Caribbean—Grenada's New Jewel Movement—in 1980. And it would stop legitimizing the Grenadan regime until it holds a free election.

The S.I. has promoted democracy best when it has done so indirectly, focusing on the horizon rather than on immediate crises. Its finest accomplishment has been to help democratic leaders construct parties around ideas rather than just around personalities, the enduring bane of Latin American politics. The S.I. bolstered Michael Manley against those in his party who would have preferred a one-party state in Jamaica. Just as the S.I. played a key role in helping democracy and Socialist parties in Spain and Portugal, so has it helped fledgling social democratic parties in Ecuador, Peru, Brazil, and elsewhere. The S.I. also helps by giving an international voice to individual parties under attack.

THE UNITED STATES still lacks a comparable way to assist democratic forces in the region. One problem is Reagan's belief that the principal threat to democracy in Central America is the "export" of communism. Except in Nicaragua and Costa Rica, however, the primary threat comes from the right; the leftist threat feeds off that and will never be reduced until the power of the right is constrained. Another problem is that U.S. political parties are weak and inward-looking, and the United States has never bothered to develop the means to help democratic forces abroad in an open and effective way. The new Democracy Program, with an impressive bipartisan board and an energetic staff director, Allen Weinstein, has just such a mandate. If it can learn from the S.I. that the threats to democracy in the region arise mostly from social and economic problems, militarization, *personalismo*, and an intransigent oligarchy—and if it can teach the S.I. that Central American communism is different from the Italian variety—then it will have gotten off on the right path. Meanwhile, a tragic irony remains: that the United States and the S.I., both aiming to promote democracy in Central America, find themselves on opposing sides of the conflict, unintentionally legitimizing extremists.

**ROBERT A. PASTOR**

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Shultz is a repairman, but we need a strategist.

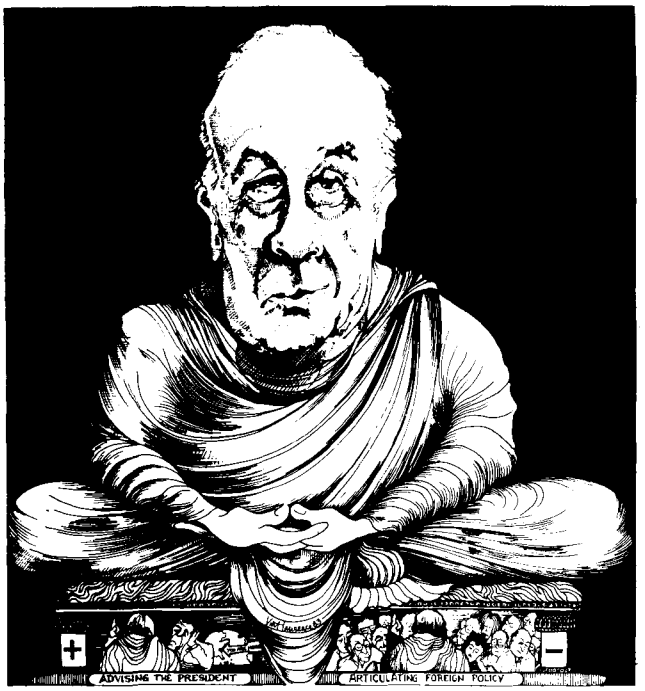
# NOWHERE MAN

## BY MORTON KONDRACKE

DAUNTING foreign policy challenges confront the United States during the Reagan era. But there are also delicious opportunities for leaders with imagination and a sense of strategy—if such leaders we only had. The Soviet Union has achieved military parity with the United States, its leadership is in transition, and new technologies threaten traditional patterns of both nuclear deterrence and arms control. It is a moment for creative superpower diplomacy. At the same time, as Europe becomes "Europeanized"—increasingly preoccupied with its own identity and its relationship to the East—American leaders need to work on restructuring Atlantic relationships. The time also has been right for creative movement in the Middle East, capitalizing on the Camp David precedent, Israel's decimation of the Palestine Liberation Organization, ebbing Soviet influence, and the threats presented by Islamic fanaticism and Israel's steady absorption of the West Bank.

We also need to find a way to cope with—ideally, to co-opt—revolutionary rage in Central America before it produces more hostile regimes beneath our southern border. The debt crisis of the poor countries, combined with the prolonged recession in the developed world, suggests the need for a new economic order of some sort, or at least for new thinking about international monetary and fiscal problems. Above all, American leaders need to reestablish an American consensus about foreign policy based on the reality that the era of isolationism is unalterably over, and that economically, politically, and militarily, we are inextricably involved with the rest of the world.

Unfortunately, in 1980 America elected a President with firm moral views but limited international expertise. He, in turn, vested top foreign policy authority in figures whose ignorance matched his own—notably Caspar Weinberger, the former Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, whom Reagan made Secretary of Defense, and William Clark, the former California Supreme Court judge whom Reagan made White House National Security Adviser. The one exception was Secretary of State Alexander Haig, who, despite his other faults, was a strategist. He was an alliance man who understood the need to support friends such as the Israelis and the Europeans before going on to parley with neutrals and adversaries. He tried to fashion a strategic consensus between Israel and moderate Arab states in the Mideast. He wanted to pressure Cuba as the means of halting revolution in Central America. Apparently Haig intended to do some back-channel negotiating with the Soviet Union. Whether his strategies would have worked we will never know, because his personality—tortured, snarling, self-promoting—led him into tantrums and turf fights with the White House, and last July he was sacked. Even though he was supposedly a star Washington maneuverer, Haig forgot the first rule of back-room bureaucratic politics: maintain your base with the Boss.




DRAWING BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Haig's departure had some policy causes and some policy consequences. Until his successor could take charge, the Clark-Weinberger foreign policy would be ascendant. Weinberger tends to believe that America's future in the Middle East lies with the Arabs, not with Israel. Both he and Clark counsel pressure on the European allies rather than conciliation as the means of maintaining Western solidarity against the Soviets. Both encourage President Reagan's proclivity for stark rhetoric and for thinking that power is primarily a function of a nation's military budget.

Haig's successor, George Shultz, has been Secretary of State for nine months now, and his reviews are mixed. It is almost universally agreed that he is intelligent, that he is a



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man of solid character and moderate policy views, and that he is a skilled mediator. His mediating and negotiating skills are being tested right now as he tries to arrange an Israeli troop withdrawal agreement in Lebanon and to revive his and President Reagan's Mideast peace plan. At the same time, Shultz is being criticized in the press by fellow Administration officials and by foreigners as lacking forcefulness, communicative talent, and imagination. And his main deficiency could be more serious yet: he may not know much about what he is doing.

IT IS reassuring, though, to listen to people talk about George Shultz's personality. He comes through sounding something like George Washington—strong, solid, dependable, deliberate, but also murky, distant, hard to grasp, even cold. One good profile of him, by Daniel Southerland of *The Christian Science Monitor*, terms Shultz "inscrutable . . . almost Japanese." A State Department subordinate says

> he is a very intelligent man with a very strong character. He is the mirror image of Haig. For example, in dealing with the Chinese. The Chinese are very threatening people. They are always telling us that it's too bad we can't have improved relations. They mean that if we want improved relations, we have to give them everything they want, which means that they should have their way with Taiwan. Well, Haig's whole reflex in dealing with a threat was to cringe. Shultz's is to stiffen. He doesn't scare easily. He doesn't weaken. Haig spoke loudly, but was loaded with self-doubt. Shultz speaks softly and is quite strong.

What Haig fatally forgot about bureaucratic maneuvering, Shultz practices as a master. "He has the President's total confidence," says a top White House aide. Shultz defers to Reagan, always backs him up in conversations with subordinates, and never contradicts him when others are present. "The whole secret of this Administration," says one official, "is that the President is not to be humiliated. Whoever does that is dead. George Shultz never does it." Unlike Reagan, Weinberger, and Clark, Shultz is no Californian—"He's a big-time Eastern establishment mogul who moved West," a fellow Cabinet officer says—but he understands the laid-back California style of the Reagan entourage in a way that Haig never did. "Those Californians—Meese, Reagan, Clark, and Weinberger—are all really nice to each other," according to one non-Californian. "Haig wasn't nice to anybody."

Shultz tends to be admired and respected by his subordinates at State, partly because he is so different from Haig—"the guerrilla wars are over now," one of them said—and partly because Shultz listens to them. "There is an astounding inner serenity to him," one of them said.

> He isn't anxious or trying to prove himself. He seems to have certain very strong beliefs—in this system of government, in free trade and open markets. He is a conservative with a small *c*, unlike some other people in this Administration, who are capital C. He also has a more optimistic view of the situation of the United States, and maybe of the human condition, than Henry Kissinger. He thinks there are irreconcilable conflicts between us and the Soviets, for example, but he thinks the United States has lots of strengths to bring to the competition and that the differences can be managed and tensions controlled.

Actually Shultz activates a certain tendency for others to impute their own views to him. This may grow out of his legendary ability to listen closely to what others tell him, question them actively, but give little of his own views back. He is not universally loved. One former aide said, "He's extraordinarily cold, and if you disagree with him, he doesn't like it. Those beady eyes get beadier and beadier. It's interesting, too, that he never praises in private, only in public, where it reflects well on him, too."

Shultz is regarded as a strong manager of the State Department in the sense that he knows what his top subordinates are doing, although he has not shaken up the place since taking over from Haig. He installed his protégé Kenneth Dam, Provost of the University of Chicago, as No. 2 man, replacing career diplomat Walter Stoessel. He transferred Haig's smart young policy planning chief, Paul D. Wolfowitz, to be Assistant Secretary of State for Asia, and restructured the policy planning staff into a collegial think tank which includes former Kissinger assistant Peter Rodman and academician Robert Osgood operating under economist Stephen Bosworth. He replaced Haig's press spokesman, Dean Fischer, with John Hughes, former editor of *The Christian Science Monitor*. But all other major bureaus—Europe, Latin America, Africa, Human Rights, etc.—remain in the hands of Haig appointees; and Lawrence Eagleburger, Haig's No. 3 man, retains the job of Undersecretary for Political Affairs. Shultz's pattern seems to be to work with what's there unless he can't.

Besides managing the department, a Secretary is supposed to make foreign policy, sell it to Congress, communicate it to the American people, and persuade other countries to follow. Some of these jobs Shultz seems to do well, others not so well. On the important ones, making foreign policy and getting other countries to go along, the jury is out but the signs are not good.

SHULTZ does get favorable notices from Congress, at least for consulting closely and for listening. "Shultz tends to get the President running room up here," says Senator Richard Lugar, a Foreign Relations Committee Republican. Shultz seems to have quieted Congressional doubts about stationing Marines in Lebanon and getting Kenneth Adelman confirmed as arms control director. At the same time, Shultz has not been too persuasive on arms control policy and Central America. A Republican Senator on the Senate Armed Services Committee said, "His reputation for probity is accurate—in his field. Given the luxury of time and resources, he would measure up to what you put to him. But he's out of his element on Armed Services issues." This Senator said he finds Caspar Weinberger, the Secretary of Defense, equally ill informed.

In communicating to the public, Shultz is perhaps at his



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least effective. One State Department correspondent says, "He has practically given up his role as chief foreign policy spokesman, and that means he has given up some of his power to influence foreign policy within the Administration." A serious TV correspondent says, "In nine months, I have never led a story, 'Secretary of State George Shultz declared today . . .' because he rarely says anything worth leading with. But now I can't get a Shultz story on the air even if it's worth reporting. They're not interested." This dilemma says lots about network TV, where celebrity status, not content, seems to count, but it also means that Shultz does not understand an important part of his function: that of articulating policy. He is so inarticulate, in fact, that correspondents snicker that he's really another Chauncey Gardiner, the Peter Sellers character in the movie *Being There* (adapted from Jerzy Kosinski's book) who mouthed inanities but was thought profound.

The one thing that can be said for public reticence in this Administration is that it ensures the President will not be upstaged, and not upstaging Reagan is apparently one way to maintain the credibility necessary to persuade him. Shultz has persuaded him to change policies in ways that can only be considered salutary. One key example is the retreat from Reagan's sanctions—urged by Weinberger and Clark—against companies involved in building the Soviet-European gas pipeline. Shultz convinced Reagan to drop the sanctions by winning an agreement from the allies to study restrictions on technology transfers to Communist countries. Everyone (Reagan possibly excepted) considers the studies a face-saver for the United States that will never lead to action (State Department officials naturally deny this). One observer says that the main policy reversal "saved NATO." That may be an exaggeration, but it did help keep Helmut Kohl Chancellor of Germany.

Shultz gets credit, along with Treasury Secretary Donald Regan and Federal Reserve Board Chairman Paul Volcker, for turning around Reagan's policy of refusing to expand International Monetary Fund money available for propping up the economies of debtor nations. The State Department won a battle against the Pentagon in persuading Reagan to propose a fallback from the so-called "zero-zero" proposal on intermediate nuclear forces, another salve for U.S.-European relations.

YET ANOTHER important Shultz contribution is in Middle East policy. Shultz did not devise Reagan's September 1 peace plan—the strategy is largely Henry Kissinger's—but he did convince the President to adopt it. The peace plan is widely considered dead unless Shultz himself can breathe some life into it on his current trip, and perhaps it was fatally flawed from the outset, requiring courage that Jordan's King Hussein and the Saudi regime do not have, and a desire for peace utterly lacking in the P.L.O. Still, the Reagan plan was worth a try, and it maintained American standing in the Arab world after the Israeli invasion of Lebanon. Shultz aides say, furthermore, that the Arab summit's communiqué at Fez implied willingness to recognize and negotiate with Israel, which was a significant step in itself that can provide a basis for future steps.

On his current trip, Shultz is charged with the specific, limited mission of securing Israeli agreement to withdraw its forces from Lebanon. "It's doable, but it's not wired," one White House aide said. The Administration's hope is that Shultz can work out an agreement on the few difficult issues that still separate Israel and Lebanon—chiefly, the role of Major Saad Haddad—so that the Administration can achieve at least one foreign policy success.

SHULTZ HAS played another important, and pleasantly surprising, role in Middle East policy—that of improving the deteriorating U.S.-Israeli relationship. As with the pipeline sanctions, this is a case of Shultz's having to repair damage inflicted by Weinberger, but at least he has done it. Shultz, like Weinberger, came to the Administration from the Bechtel Corporation, a huge construction company doing billions of dollars' worth of business with Saudi Arabia. Prior to his confirmation, he led some Senators to think that he, like Weinberger, took a militantly pro-Saudi, anti-Israeli attitude toward Middle East policy. This has not proved to be the case, however. "He's been fair and decent," said one pro-Israel lobbyist. "He apparently knows that you cannot mediate a dispute if one party thinks you are trying to do them in." Shultz repeatedly resisted Weinberger's efforts to impose an arms embargo on Israel—failing, in the case of F-16 jets, succeeding on Sidewinder missiles—and in a supposedly bitter meeting in front of Reagan on April 17, beat Weinberger on the issue of releasing American parts for the Lavi, a new airplane project that means some 25,000 jobs for Israel.

Even though he is doing creditable work as a diplomatic repairman, so far Shultz cannot be considered the foreign policy builder that the nation needs. His actions have been responses to outside influences—European pressures, Kissinger ideas, financial crises, Israeli complaints—rather than innovations of his own. Except for the Middle East initiative, they have also tended to be limited, incremental moves, not broad resolutions.

A special new challenge is coming—again from the outside—on strategic arms control. The Scowcroft Commission, appointed to find a basing system for the MX missile, actually went far beyond its assignment, and completely discredited the President's START proposal, demonstrating that it would leave U.S. land-based missiles more vulnerable to Soviet attack than under the SALT II treaty negotiated by President Carter. The Scowcroft Commission also called for the United States to persuade the Soviets to move from large, multi-warhead missiles to small, single-warhead rockets. The challenge to Shultz and to Reagan is whether the Administration can devise a new negotiating position, or whether it will tinker with the existing one—perhaps by adjusting upward the permitted number of missile launchers—and postpone to another day and to a START II treaty the shift to single-warhead missiles.

George Shultz's possibly fatal handicap in meeting such



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challenges is simply his lack of experience with and knowledge of foreign policy issues. "George Shultz has two real interests," said an Administration colleague. "One is the Arab-Israeli dispute, and the other is foreign economic policy. I'm not sure he is really interested in foreign policy beyond that. This is a guy who never thought about the really big questions of global politics—détente, Africa, North-South relations in any other sense but economics, revolution in the Third World. Shultz does get carefully briefed by the State Department, but he doesn't have much independent knowledge, no views. That means that the assistant secretaries run the State Department, and they do have views. He's the representative of the assistant secretaries."

A critic says this is a pattern with Shultz. "He's had all those jobs—budget director, Secretary of Labor, Treasury Secretary, the Bechtel job—and he has no following of his own. He doesn't stand for anything. He gets adopted by an organization and helps the organization do what it would do well anyway. That's not what you want at State. The natural tendency of the State Department is to maintain the status quo." One academic observes, "Shultz has no background to get out in front of events and issues. He is reasonable. He is sound. He is an institutional conservative who believes in the establishment, in NATO and the I.M.F., but he's no innovator, no lead player."

Still another academic says, "There are two types of foreign policy you can develop. One is region by region, case by case. The other is an overall global framework into which you fit regional policies. If you don't know about foreign policy, you can't have an overall framework. Studying individual areas does not get you a global policy." What George Shultz seems to be is a talented conciliator, an intelligent muddler, a worthy repairman. If salve could save the world, he might be a great Secretary of State. Unfortunately, it takes more.

With llamas, Scottish stamps, and rent-a-cows.

# How To Beat The I.R.S.

## By James K. Glassman

"INVESTORS are out there like vacuum cleaners," said an official of Merrill Lynch in mid-April. "You put out a product and they just suck it up." The product is tax shelters—not small-time shelters like Individual Retirement Accounts, but sophisticated shelters like equipment-leasing partnerships and oil and gas income funds.

The boom in tax shelters is taking place at the very time supporters of Reaganomics told us it wouldn't. One of the blessings of the Reagan tax cuts, we were continually assured during Congressional debate in 1981, would be that they would chase people out of unproductive tax shelters and into productive—and taxable—investments. The theory went as follows: someone in a 50 percent bracket might be encouraged by his high marginal tax rate to seek shelter in a cattle-feeding scheme or a leveraged real-estate deal. But with his bracket cut to 40 or 45 percent, his tax savings wouldn't be so great, so he'd invest instead in common stocks paying taxable dividends or in Treasury bonds paying taxable interest. It was an attractive idea; lower tax brackets would yield higher tax revenues. Alas, things haven't worked out so neatly.

Instead of eliminating shelters, the Reagan Administration seems to have encouraged them, in part by crowning them with legitimacy. The President and his supporters have glorified self-interest, while at the same time denigrating government. In the process, they have made avoiding taxes seem a noble pursuit. A headline in a slick magazine called, believe it or not, *National Tax Shelter Digest* sums up the new ethic: YOUR RIGHT AND DUTY TO TAX SHELTER INCOME. A prospectus on a real-estate tax-shelter deal sponsored by Quantum Corporation of Marina Del Rey, California, brags that the 3.3-for-1 tax write-off comes courtesy of the "influential real-estate lobby." And tax-shelter promotion, once the province of some of the sleaziest financial operators in the country, is now practiced by such respectable firms as Merrill Lynch and American Express.

Whether Reagan's economic policies have actually encouraged shelters may be open to debate, but recent reports make it clear that the tax cuts haven't produced the promised results. Instead, according to Robert A. Stanger & Co., a respected firm that publishes a newsletter on tax shelters, Americans in 1982 put $9 billion into "tax-advantaged investments"—in other words, sophisticated shelters (limited partnerships rather than I.R.A.s and municipal bonds). In 1981 the figure was less than $8 billion. That's an increase of 12.5 percent in a year when inflation was less than 5 percent. What is even more remarkable is that this growth occurred in a year when the two most popular shelter industries, oil and real estate, were having



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a miserable time. With oil prices dropping and real estate difficult to sell, shelters still thrived.

Now, in the first quarter of 1983, with oil and real estate recovering, shelter sales are soaring. Stanger reports that investments in "public" shelters (those registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission) are 53 percent higher than they were during the same period last year. "They're rewriting the record books," Stanger said. Investment in public and private sophisticated shelters will probably exceed $11 billion in 1983; that's nearly eight times the 1977 level of $1.4 billion. The tax cuts clearly have not dampened the popularity of shelters. To understand why, you have to understand how a shelter works.

"Dear Prospective Investor," writes Jeffrey Adler, executive vice president of Ag Asset. "We at Ag Asset, the nation's largest dairy cow management company, thank you for your inquiry regarding our 1982 Dairy Cow Leasing Program." Dairy cow management? Are we about to help Heidi lead Bossy through a grassy meadow? Actually, the prime aim of dairy cow management, according to a brightly colored prospectus that features lots of pictures of healthy Holsteins, is "substantial tax benefits." Here's how it works: you put up $15,000 and Ag Asset arranges a loan for you for $22,500. Of the total, $7,500 goes to commission and fees for the promoters (a common trait of shelters is that promoters are nicely compensated) and $30,000 goes to buy cows that are then leased to farmers. The rent-a-cow business is particularly attractive because cows can be depreciated quickly, over five years, and because cows, like printing presses or die-casting machines, are assets that qualify for the investment tax credit. In all, during the first year, that $15,000 cash outlay throws off $19,061 in deductions to a taxpayer in a 50 percent bracket, which begins at $41,500 for single people and $85,600 for married couples filing jointly. And for the next four years, with no extra investment, you get another $4,000 to $5,000 in annual write-offs. A first-year write-off of 1.3 to 1 ($1.30 in deductions for every dollar you put up) is probably not high enough to attract the attention of the Internal Revenue Service. Among the taxpayers who have sheltered their income with aid from the bovine set is Yoko Ono.

BUT COWS ARE chicken feed. When a serious taxophobe like Attorney General William French Smith is looking for a shelter to call his own, he turns to oil. As an investor in Yale-Quay Energy Partners, a drilling venture in Oklahoma, Smith put up $16,500 in 1981 and received a deduction that year of $66,000—a 4-for-1 write-off. In 1982, another $16,500 investment gave him $33,000 in deductions. The key to Yale-Quay, and to many other high-multiple shelters, is that the taxpayer gets tax benefits immediately for the full value of an investment while putting up cash for only a small portion of that investment. When does the taxpayer cough up the remaining portion? A long time after he's taken the write-offs—at which point, he's probably found another shelter. As lawyer Stephen L. Hester described the Yale-Quay scheme at a Congressional hearing last September, investors can "buy $4,000 of immediate tax deductions for $1,000 down, so long as they promise to pay the remaining $3,000 at some time or other—perhaps in 1993."

The hottest shelters these days are Arabian horses and other fancy animals (*National Tax Shelter Digest* is running an ad touting investments in llama breeding in Oregon), cable TV, hotels, and stamps. The major incentives are leverage, fast depreciation (hotel furnishings can be written off in five years, for example, making hotels better shelters than most real estate, which is written off in fifteen years), and the investment tax credit (yes, llamas qualify).

A particularly nifty maneuver nets a 4.2-for-1 deduction the first year and a 4-for-1 deduction the second on an investment in stamps from three obscure islands off Scotland called Bernera, Eynhallow, and Staffa. The key is a high evaluation of a "stamp master," the plate used to print the stamps. An investor puts up $12,000 the first year—$2,000 for production costs (not deductible, alas) and $10,000 for leasing the master. He gets deductions of $10,075 (the leasing cost plus $750 in accrued interest). And he gets a $20,000 investment tax credit (10 percent of the full value of the stamp master even though the investor is putting up only 5 percent of the master's value the first year). It's a wonderful deal. Say you're a married lawyer with a taxable household income of $80,000. You put up $12,000 for the Scottish stamps, and you get $10,750 in deductions, knocking your taxable income down to $69,250, which makes your tax bill $22,237. Then you apply the investment tax credit to that, and your total tax bill is just $2,237. Without the Scottish stamps, your bill would have been $27,505. You've made yourself $25,000 richer with an investment of $12,000 in a tax shelter.

READING THE PROSPECTUS for the Scottish stamps gave me a feeling of déjà vu. I had been through almost the same routine before, in a meeting room in the Mayflower Hotel three years ago. Instead of a stamp master, the tax-shelter promoters were touting lithographic plates by famous artists. The idea is to have the investor "purchase," with a relatively small amount of cash, something whose value is difficult to judge. The premise is similar to a far simpler scam: you buy a truckload of old books for $1,000, get a friendly bibliophile to assess them at $4,000, and donate them to charity. You get a 4-for-1 write-off, or an immediate cash-flow profit of $1,000 if you're in the 50 percent bracket.

Roscoe L. Egger, the current I.R.S. Commissioner, describes a particularly outrageous variation on the theme. A record master worth $100 was evaluated at $250,000 and leased to investors who took enormous investment tax credits. The law even allows them to carry the credits *back* and apply them to previous years' returns. And the I.R.S. is required to send out refunds on these old returns within ninety days. "The promoter," says Egger, "will lend investors the cash, at 20 percent interest, to invest in the scheme. Upon receipt of the quick refund, the investor pays off the loan from the promoter." The shelter in ques-



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tion resulted in the I.R.S. giving out $57 million to $62 million in credits to 5,200 taxpayers.

What's infuriating about these tax shelters with high write-offs is that many of them are clearly illegal—yet despite new tools provided by the 1981 and 1982 tax laws, the I.R.S. can't do much about them. It's snowed under with work. When Jerome Kurtz, the I.R.S. Commissioner under President Carter, left office, 200,000 cases involving possibly abusive shelters were waiting to be reviewed. Today that backlog has grown to 300,000 cases. "There is something wrong with tax administration," Kurtz said last fall, "and what is wrong is the absence of adequate resources to move these cases."

The I.R.S. isn't the only enforcement agency that's understaffed. The Tax Division of the Justice Department has just ten lawyers working on illegal shelters, even though Egger estimates that abusive shelters cost the Treasury $3 billion a year. Over the past four years, only 469 shelter cases have been sent to the Justice Department for prosecution, and only 48 cases have ended in convictions.

Although the Reagan Administration may have helped create an atmosphere in which tax shelters, legal and illegal, can thrive, it actually has a better record than the Carter Administration for getting laws enacted that help enforcement. In the past year, the number of prosecutions, although minuscule, has increased, and the I.R.S. is now going after promoters—tax-shelter packagers and lawyers and C.P.A.s who give favorable rulings to questionable schemes—as well as taxpayers. But the penalties aren't tough enough. And even if they were, it's doubtful that they would deter promoters; the rewards are very high, and the risks, given the voluntary nature of our tax system and the favorable odds in what Egger calls "the audit lottery," are very low.

TRYING TO CURE the problem through tighter enforcement is probably futile. Reagan, in fact, may have the right approach: drive people out of tax shelters through structural change in the tax law. Unfortunately, the structural change that he thought would work—cutting marginal tax rates—has failed. And it's failed for an obvious reason: everyone likes tax deductions, and everyone can use them. It's true that those in 50 percent brackets can use them to better advantage, but those in lower brackets can make out pretty well themselves. A shelter that provides $4,000 in deductions for every $1,000 invested knocks $2,000 off the tax bill of someone in a 50 percent bracket, but it still knocks $1,400 off the bill of someone in a 35 percent bracket. Hearings before the House Subcommittee on Select Revenue Measures a year ago made this point emphatically. The committee looked at the tax returns of people who were engaged in door-to-door or telephone sales part time, working for companies like Amway and Shaklee. Although the companies themselves don't condone the practice, these taxpayers frequently use their part-time work as a ruse to convert nondeductible personal, living, and family expenses into deductible business expenses. One example cited in the hearings was a taxpayer who made $20,000 in his regular job and $5,000 through direct selling. But he wrote off $6,586 for business use of his car, $848 for the cost of meetings in his home, $515 for entertainment, and $1,766 for a home office. His total business deductions came to $21,000, and his total business loss to $16,000. He threw in $4,000 in personal exemptions and wiped out his entire tax bill for the year. The point here is that the fellow was making only $20,000. He was in a 25 percent tax bracket. And yet he went to extraordinary lengths to score deductions.

A better approach than to lower marginal tax rates would be to eliminate deductions and credits entirely, or almost entirely, and adopt a flat or slightly graduated tax of the sort proposed in bills introduced by Senator Bill Bradley of New Jersey and Representative Richard Gephardt of Indiana. (See "Flat-Rate Talk," by Robert S. McIntyre, TNR, July 19 & 26, 1982.)

CHANGING the entire tax code just to pick up the $3 billion that escapes the I.R.S. each year because of abusive shelters sounds drastic. But tax shelters are only the most obvious symbol of what's wrong with the U.S. Tax Code: it's complex and unfair and (Reagan is right on this score) it encourages unproductive economic activity. The inequity in the code is more horizontal than vertical. In other words, the big problem is not that rich people don't pay high enough taxes; most rich people do. (Only 9 percent of families making more than $200,000 in 1980 paid less than a quarter of their gross income in taxes.) It is that people who make the same gross income pay widely varying tax bills. And the ones with low tax bills receive that blessing for reasons (like investing in llamas and Scottish stamps) that make no economic or ethical sense. This inequity encourages cynicism and disrespect for law and government, and it encourages an attitude that seems to suit the Zeitgeist of the Reagan Administration: only suckers pay taxes.

There are 104 categories of "tax expenditures," or loopholes, in the Tax Code, and it can be argued that a tax shelter—which is merely the most sophisticated form of loophole—far from being antisocial or antigovernment, is an ethical instrument. Shelters are there because Congress, in its wisdom, wanted to encourage specific beneficial activities—building low-cost housing, getting industry to renew its plant and equipment, encouraging people to insulate their houses. But once written into the law, loopholes tend to stay. And tend to be exploited by sharp lawyers and accountants. Many of the justifications for the 104 loopholes are lost to history. They offend our sense of equity, and they push us into questionable behavior. We go into debt rather than saving. We buy houses we can't afford. If Congress wants to encourage certain kinds of economic and social behavior, it should do so directly, by appropriating funds, not by using the Tax Code. The I.R.S. is having a tough enough time just collecting what's owed.



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5134          **********
5135          * PROCESS HANDOFF PRIORITY
5136          **********
5137
5138       CALL SOMHHNDPRI (,,S_EXC_MSG
HND_PRI      EQU      $
             LD       DE,(S_EXC_MSGDAT)
             LD       HL,(S_EXC_ORGPRT)
             CALL     SOMHHNDPRI
5139       GO TO T_RETURN
             JP       T_RETURN
5140
5141    T_HND_REQ:
5142
5143          **********
5144          * PROCESS HANDOFF REQUEST *
5145          **********
5146
5147       CALL SOMHHNDREQ (,,S_EXC_MSG
HND_REQ      EQU      $
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# STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

## Frozen in Flight

*Luck is not chance—*
*It's Toil—*

wrote Emily Dickinson. This is false. It's so plainly false that it hardly needs to be disproved. Of course, without toil, luck can't be exploited if it happens to come; but you can toil away all your life and never have any real luck. Ask millions.

*The Flight of the Eagle*
Summit Features Distributors

Luck can play particular hell with artists, particularly hellish because it has nothing at all to do with talent. Mode of presentation, current critical atmosphere and competence, moment of appearance—all these can affect an artwork, whatever its merits, thereby affecting an artist's career. Worst, perhaps, is not to have the luck of good self-management, the ability to make the right choices about how to apply one's talent. Hemingway said somewhere that every artist needs not only talent but, in equal measure, the lucky gift to be able to guide it well. If the fairy godmother forgets Part Two at the artist's cradle, Part One is going to suffer.

Jan Troell, the exceptionally gifted Swedish filmmaker, is suffering—from several kinds of bad luck. His first feature, a lovely work called *Here's Your Life* (TNR, January 11, 1969), was shown in the United States in a version so truncated that Troell was reportedly sickened by it, and it has never been shown here properly. His second feature, *Who Saw Him Die?*, with the marvelous Per Oscarsson, has never been publicly shown here at all, though the reviews I've read in film journals make it sound fascinating. Then Troell made two feature films in tandem, derived from an immense novel by Vilhelm Moberg—*The Emigrants* (September 30, 1972) and *The New Land* (October 6, 1973). These two films, about a husband and wife played by Max von Sydow and Liv Ullmann, constitute the best screen treatment of one of the major events in Western history, European immigration to this continent. (As always, Troell collaborated on the screenplay, then directed, photographed, and edited on his own.) Excellent in almost every way, this monumental double achievement has never had anything like the recognition it deserves.

And then Troell moved into another kind of bad luck—let's call it the Hemingway curse—the unlucky management of his talent. He accepted a Hollywood job and, patently uncomfortable with it, made an unbelievably commonplace film called *Zandy's Bride*, with Ullmann and Gene Hackman. Lately the Hemingway curse has been working more subtly, because he's still not managing his career well even though he's back at home again.

*The Flight of the Eagle* is based on fact. In 1897 a Swede named S. A. Andrée took off in a balloon from Spitzbergen in an attempt to fly over the North Pole and claim it for Sweden. He had two younger companions. (One of them was named Strindberg, a cousin of *the* Strindberg.) Balloon and crew disappeared. In 1930 the crew of a Norwegian ship discovered the remains of the three explorers, along with Andrée's diaries and some well-preserved film. (Troell uses many of the photographs that were developed from this film.) In 1967 Per Olof Sundman wrote a "documentary novel" about the Andrée expedition, and from that novel, Troell and collaborators did a screenplay. Then, as usual, Troell himself directed, photographed, and edited.

The diaries disclosed that the balloon had gone down a mere three days after takeoff: and detailed the hardships of the three men as they dragged sleds loaded with supplies across arctic emptiness, trying to reach a place where they might be found. Apparently Sundman expanded on the diaries with some novelistic invention, which Troell has used. The deaths, however, are certain. Strindberg collapsed of fatigue and drowned in a small pool in the ice before his friends found him. The second man was savaged by a polar bear and died. Andrée, the survivor, just died. There was nothing else for him to do.

What drew Troell to this story? The immediate answers are obvious. It's a story of action and courage. For a Swede, it's a patriotic story. For a cinematographer with Troell's northern eye, the location work must have been highly seductive. (One of the most exquisite shots I've seen is in *Here's Your Life*, a sled slipping along over the white ground with a white sky above it.) The arduous journey is, like most arduous journeys, also a journey to the interior of the men involved. And the story is analogical: these three aerial explorers—supposedly aerial, anyway—are (relatively recent) forebears of astronauts.

But here's where the bad luck comes in. Troell presumably took the answers above as sufficient reasons to make the film. He failed to ask the most important question: What is the picture going to be about during the time that it takes the three explorers to die? Approximately the first third of the film is taken up with the first attempt in 1896, aban-

### FILMS WORTH SEEING

*The Draughtsman's Contract.* Written and directed by Peter Greenaway, this Restoration comedy of intrigue turns into something deadlier. Elegant and diabolically delightful.

*Monty Python's The Meaning of Life.* Six of the wittiest men alive show that they are also six of the angriest—at human failings. (Including, implicitly, their own.)

*The Return of Martin Guerre.* Sixteenth-century France. A factual story about a farmer who comes home after eight years and may be an impostor. Fair story, well acted, superbly realized in period feeling.

*Tender Mercies.* Strong, quiet religious allegory. A Texas singer-composer—Robert Duvall, first-class—hits the alcoholic skids, then comes back just as far as he chooses. Fine work.

**SK**



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doned because of unfavorable winds; the building of a new balloon during the winter; the recruiting of the two associates; the personal affairs and farewells; the takeoff from Spitzbergen; and the collapse of the balloon three days later. But then what?

Films about trapped men, fact or fiction, trapped in submarines or on rafts or in mines or on lost patrols, all have a strong family resemblance. No matter how gifted the filmmaker or heroic the story, the films tend to move into the same curves of character revelation and dramatic dissolution. This is even more true if history ordains the ending. When circumstances grant the filmmaker a large enough cast of trapped men, we get the strong man (usually, but not always, the leader), the weakling, the cynic, the romantic, the religious fanatic, and so on. *The Flight of the Eagle* has room for only three. Max von Sydow is the staunch leader, tough as ambulatory pemmican. Sverre Anker Ousdal is nicely ambiguous as the doubter. Göran Stangertz is appealing as the young romantic who dreams and daydreams of his fiancée and writes her unsendable letters. (Troell's most desperate moments are his *Elvira Madigan* flashbacks and fantasies about the girl.)

Ideally—no, pragmatically—this film ought to exist for what happens after the balloon collapses. Yet this is exactly when *The Flight of the Eagle* begins to pall: because comparable films, whether fiction or not, have taken us through the same basic story so often that we can look only for variation, not for differences. And there isn't sufficient variation. I forced myself to hope that Troell had a theme up his sleeve, some idea of pertinence and depth that he would dramatize through the devolution of these three lives. But all we get is what we see and foresee. Troell tries to compensate with other elements. (Perhaps he didn't think of them as compensation. Perhaps they were his purpose—which makes his self-management even more unlucky.) He does make us appreciate the size of the space, he does chill our bones with the cold, he does make us respect these three men. But—oh, vulgar inescapable comment—the film drags.

Fates! Attend! A greatly gifted man has endured enough bad luck at your hands, in self-management and in other ways. It's time to lay off him with troubles and lay on with some triumphs. A break for Troell, Fates. Please.

# ROBERT BRUSTEIN ON THEATER

## The Shakespeare Legacy of William Poel

It is generally assumed that the man who rescued Shakespeare from historical romantic stagnation was the English actor-director William Poel, when around the turn of the century he began to stage the plays on a simple platform in close proximity to the audience. This

*The Tempest*
*All's Well That Ends Well*
by William Shakespeare

strategy, an effort to simulate the procedures of the Elizabethan stage, not only freed the works from those cumbersome, brocaded, over-decorated productions familiar to us from nineteenth-century portraiture (and still beloved of scholarly Bardolators), but effectively licensed future directors to approach the plays as allographic signatures subject to the widest possible ahistorical interpretations.

I saw two such contemporary interpretations in the course of a single week. The first, at the adventurous Trinity Square Repertory Theater in Providence, was a performance of *The Tempest*, staged, like Poel's, on a relatively bare wooden platform. This particular platform, however, was conceived by the master designer Eugene Lee, in collaboration with the innovative director Adrian Hall; between them they managed to create a construction so ingenious that it virtually became a character in the play. A scaffolding of unstained pine with ladders extending into the audience, the setting looked simple enough to spectators entering the theater, though it occupied a space in front of a bare wall smeared with chalked graffiti and scientific equations. But in the opening storm scene, it sprouted a sail and creaking pulleys, and in the grip of a fierce tempest began pitching and rolling and spilling water onto the shoes of the spectators in the front row. Capriciously falling from shower spouts in the ceiling, the rains soaked Miranda as well, drenching her hair and overflowing her galoshes, while Prospero calmly protected himself against the elements by unfurling an umbrella.

As described, the concept may sound a little frivolous, but it endowed the opening scenes with a wonderfully boisterous energy without in any way compromising an intelligent, careful penetration of the text. In Hall's interpretation, clearly influenced by Jan Kott who, in *Shakespeare Our Contemporary*, saw the shadow of Leonardo da Vinci spreading over *The Tempest*, Prospero is a combination of eccentric modern scientist and hippie dropout, while Ariel, who trails after him wearing a white smock and carrying a clipboard, functions as his laboratory assistant. No doubt punning on his name, Hall also turns Ariel into an aerial acrobat, swinging through the air in a shiny leotard, and performing athletic stunts above the heads of the audience, when he is not hanging upside down like a sleeping bat. (At one point, this muscular young man makes an appearance as a wood nymph, sporting a bathing cap and red tutu.)

If Prospero represents science gone haywire, the shipwrecked courtiers suggest a variety of totalitarian bureaucrats and militarists, and they are severely plagued not only by Ariel in his various guises but also by a group of malignant skinheads out of the asylum at Charenton (or perhaps—gaunt as they are—out of Auschwitz or Hiroshima) who smother them in fog effects and scald them with hissing steam. All of this provides continuous interest and robust fun, admittedly at the cost of some lyricism and grace, but the concept is vindicated in the performances of Stephano and Trinculo, and particularly of Caliban, where Kott's vision of a *Tempest*—"serious and severe, lyrical and grotesque"—is thoroughly realized. As played by that splendid actor, Richard Kavanaugh, looking and sounding like Charles Laughton in his prime, Caliban lumbers on stage shaking with rage and fear, with his feet strapped to two high stools. These encumbrances give him something more than height and menace; they endow him with a clumsy, mournful impediment which is at the same time savage and poignant. More than any other in my memory, this Caliban provides a bridge between the comic scenes and the romantic plot—a bewildered citizen of a world grown increasingly circum-



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scribed by totalitarian government and irresponsible science.

Not all of this production is equally satisfying—the second half tends to run out of invention—but one rarely loses faith in the firm control of the director or the histrionic grasp (two parts excepted) of the actors. Now in its nineteenth year of operation, the Trinity Rep continues to display the unity and imagination enjoyed only by a permanent company of actors, even when its resources are hobbled by a shortage of money and means.

THE ROYAL Shakespeare Company is also a permanent theater that creates organic collaborative works, though without any apparent limit in resources—or so it would seem from the enviably luxurious and historically liberated production of *All's Well That Ends Well* at the Martin Beck. Trevor Nunn, the director, has chosen to locate the play in Paris around the turn of the century, a decision that makes for a physically handsome and atmospherically rich evening. John Gunter's setting for *All's Well* is a gigantic glass structure that looks at first like a European railway station, then transforms into sitting rooms, conservatories, ballrooms, restaurants, and battlefields. Linda Fisher's costumes (after Lindy Hemming's original designs) are splendid re-creations of fin-de-siècle female fashions, while the men wear a variety of excellently tailored uniforms and three-piece mufti. Elegantly costumed couples dance to graceful Chopin waltzes; early flivvers chug onto stage, driven by male operators in dusters and goggles; two aviators, in leather helmets and boots, mingle in the king's anteroom with fencers and card players; a full brass band marches through the action, followed by smart-stepping officers—the only thing missing perhaps is Maurice Chevalier, thanking heaven for little girls.

This strategy helps to focus and concentrate Shakespeare's difficult story, and it keeps one amused by glittering visual choices. But like all stage glare, *All's Well* eventually begins to tire the eyes. I don't mean the production is always excessively pretty. The war scenes in "Firenze," as a matter of fact, have the grim and grit (mixed with manufactured fog) of the battles in *A Farewell to Arms*. But as the evening wore on, and the details kept accumulating, I gave way to a suspicion that the director's in-



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terest in the play was essentially decorative. Nunn's *All's Well* is not as overproduced as his recent unfortunate *Cats*, for the human element is visible beneath the sparkle and the splash. But some internal reality is still being sacrificed in the exterior display.

For the visual rewards are often gained at the expense of character development and actors' energy: the glass set is appropriate because many of the performances are under glass. I don't mean to fault the talents of the company, which is accomplished, well spoken, graceful, attractive. But the commitment of the actors seems primarily to their clothes and diction, only secondarily to their characters. This is a long evening—over three hours. If the people are not very interesting, you are in danger of becoming as bored as at any costume event, after the novelty has worn off. Playing Helena, admittedly a difficult part, Harriet Walker has the severe profile of Minerva coupled with the vocal mannerisms of an ingenue with a catch in her throat, so that she appears less like Shaw's unwomanly woman than like a designing battle-axe in ruthless pursuit of her prey. John Franklyn-Robbins's ailing King of France has dignity and regality but a fistula which seems to have robbed him not only of physical strength but of projection as well. Margaret Tyzack as the dowager Countess of Rosillion possesses elegance and hauteur, yet lacks sufficient passion and vigor. Geoffrey Hutching's Lavache is a working-class Quasimodo and Stephen Moore's Parolles, the "jackanapes with scarves," is a boisterous and very funny fop in the drawing room. As for Philip Franks's Bertram, he is edgy, high-strung, splenetic, but we are not convinced at the end that his marriage to Helena promises either pleasure or future.

Perhaps that is the intent. The final moment of the evening—as Bertram and Helena walk slowly upstage to the connubial bed—gives a fin-de-siècle feeling to a fin-de-siècle conception, evoking a moment of melancholy emotion. But such moments are rare in this long, attenuated, handsomely appointed show. William Poel attempted to rescue Shakespeare from frozen history for the purpose of cutting through contrivance to the heart of the play. Part of his legacy is the updated production, later invented by Tyrone Guthrie as a means of "jollying up" the text. Sometimes liberating, this procedure also strikes one sometimes as just another form of contrivance, just another way of burying Shakespeare under the artifices of time.

# THE PRINCE OF HISTORIANS

## The Wheels of Commerce: Civilization & Capitalism, 15th-18th Century, Volume 2
## by Fernand Braudel
## translated from the French by Siân Reynolds

(Harper & Row, 670 pp., $35)

If there were a Nobel Prize for history, there is no doubt whatever that the leading candidate for such an honor would be Fernand Braudel. His reputation was established in 1949 when his masterpiece, *The Mediterranean in the Age of Philip II*, first appeared. Thereafter he succeeded Lucien Febvre as editor of the *Annales* and became head of the Sixth Section of the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes in Paris, from which position he directed the researches of scores of eager scholars. Now in his old age he offers us a second masterpiece, *Civilization & Capitalism, 15th-18th Century*, in no less than three volumes, entitled respectively, *The Structures of Everyday Life*, *The Wheels of Commerce*, and (yet to appear in English) *The Perspective of the World*.

Like a sturdy milking stool, Braudel's claim to eminence rests on three legs. First and most enduring, he writes elegant French, and the literary distinction of his prose comes through satisfactorily in this translation by Siân Reynolds. His book is therefore a delight to read, and long after the debates to which he here contributes will have ceased to command much attention, Braudel may, like Gibbon, continue to be read for his style.

Second, he is enormously erudite. His *Mediterranean* was the fruit of years of reading microfilms, mostly from Spanish and Italian archives, even though it was actually written in a P.O.W. camp in Germany during World War II. The present work carries a far more abundant apparatus of learning than Braudel's earlier masterpiece did, having been composed with the advantage and handicap of access to all the resources of a research library. Most of the languages of Europe are at his command, and he has used them with impressive energy. Archival sources bulk less large than before; but then, his theme is the world, and for that secondary authorities must be relied on even by the most linguistically gifted historian. Braudel's footnotes attest the rise of English-language scholarship in the past generation, but his central inspiration and intellectual heritage remain thoroughly French. For an heir of English-language patterns of thought this is, indeed, what gives special piquancy to his work.

Third, and most important of all, Braudel asks large and important questions about history, and uses literary art and all the resources of his erudition to try to answer them. The question here addressed is indicated in the general title *Civilization and Capitalism*. How ought we to view these abstractions during the centuries from 1400 to 1800, when a growingly capitalist and increasingly imperialist Europe established hegemony over the rest of the globe? Braudel thus chose to formulate the central question of all modern history—the rise of the West—by concentrating on its economic aspects. He assumes rather than asserts, much less proves, that economic factors come first, simply because they are the aspect of the past that interests him so much as almost to exclude political and military, religious and aesthetic, scientific and technological dimensions of behavior.

In *The Mediterranean in the Age of Philip II*, Braudel established a threefold distinction between 1) enduring human circumstances, 2) medium-length surges of expansion and contraction in economic, demographic, and cultural affairs, and 3) the superficial events of conscious political life. The book was



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organized accordingly into three separate parts, and Braudel made no very great effort to explore interactions across these limits. Cycles of ebb and flow were simply superimposed on unchanging circumstances and conditions—by definition, so to speak. Political events—military campaigns, the acts and intentions of statesmen and prelates and the like—were in turn superimposed on cyclic patterns of growth and recession without affecting any of the underlying, basic, and limiting conditions in any significant fashion.

In his second work, Braudel adheres to this same scheme. The first volume, which came out in French in 1967, dealt with the enduring features of material subsistence—routines of work, housing, clothing, communications, and so forth. By keeping close to the peasant level, where the overwhelming majority of people remained throughout the centuries with which Braudel was concerned, he could and did assume no change, or no significant change, in such routines. Time became irrelevant therefore; variations in space, i.e., divergent adaptation to various geographical and climatic conditions, were what mattered.

I MUST CONFESS that this volume seemed to me far less successful than the corresponding parts of *The Mediterranean*. In his earlier work, Braudel described a part of the world he knew very well indeed from long personal experience as well as from texts. His geographical sense, honed by the French educational system, gave a finely nuanced precision to his portrait of human adaptation to Mediterranean landscapes. But when he tried to apply the same technique to the world scene, its variety was too great and his knowledge too bookish to produce anything like so persuasive a portrait of the whole. Instead, selection of what to record and what to leave out seemed merely whimsical, resulting in a hodgepodge of miscellaneous information about humble life in various parts of the earth that seemed thrown together mainly because Braudel happened to have found reports of it in texts he could read. What was supposed to hold it all together—the fact that local production and consumption was not dependent on recourse to a market or affected by any process of formal exchange—was insufficient to bring satisfactory order to his account.

Braudel may well have been dissatisfied himself. At any rate, the eleven years between the appearance of *The Structures of Everyday Life* and its sequels registered a prolonged struggle on his part to bring satisfactory form and shape to his theme. In his own words in this new book:

> I have started the chapters you are about to read four or five times over. I have delivered them as lectures at the Collège de France and at the École des Hautes Études. I have written and rewritten them from start to finish. . . . And I am not at all sure that my final version is the clearest, or the closest to what I think, or am trying to think. I console myself with a remark by the British historian Frederic W. Maitland (1887) that 'simplicity is the outcome of technical subtlety; it is the goal, not the starting point.' With luck we may achieve it in the end.

WELL, in a sense Braudel *has* achieved simplicity, for his data are neatly marshaled into five chapters according to a simple, idiosyncratic scheme. But whether it corresponds to what he really thinks is very much in question. Over and over again he spoils the simplicity for which he strains so hard by remarking how complicated things really were, and by pointing out how unclear the distinctions his structure seeks to impose on economic behavior actually remain. Braudel freely allows pullulating data to compromise simplicity and intelligibility. He delights in detail. Brief case studies abound. Theoretical structures are sketched only to be called into question. A complex, puzzling, and paradoxical book results, immensely provocative and anything but simple.

Let me first sketch the simplicity at which Braudel aimed. Chapters one and two treat of markets in all their variety: local peasant gatherings, long distance fairs, shops and speciality shops, and the still more specialized exchanges of wholesale commodities and of immaterial claims on wealth like bills of exchange and shares of stock. Face-to-face exchange of tangible goods and services, concluded in a single encounter, is the model; what happened when a customer came to an artisan's shop is the norm. In such exchanges, prices fluctuated somewhat in response to changes in supply and demand, but for the most part were fixed by tradition. Buyer and seller clearly benefited. Both parties therefore entered into the bargain freely and deliberately. Wealth increased



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through specialization of labor; civilization flourished accordingly, and without exploitation of one trading partner by the other. Braudel heartily approves of this sort of market relationship, and he reserves the name of economic behavior for it. He also thinks it universal.

> . . . production, exchange and consumption at the levels at which we have so far described them are elementary obligations of all populations, and do not depend on ancient or recent choices made by a particular civilization, or on the relationship it has with its environment, or on the nature of society, or its political structures, or on a past which continues to influence everyday life. These elementary rules have no frontiers. In theory, then, at this level, the similarities ought to be more numerous than the differences.

And sure enough, in the next few pages he discovers that markets in China, Japan, India, and Islam did match European patterns at the local, face-to-face level.

Chapters three and four, however, address themselves to capitalism as manifested first in production, then in trade. Here Braudel sees something antithetic to the economic life of the market. Capitalism is predatory. It saps the

> favored terrain of the market economy with its many horizontal communications between different markets: here a degree of automatic coordination usually links supply, demand and prices. Then alongside, or rather above this layer, comes the zone of the anti-market, where the great predators roam and the law of the jungle operates. This, today and in the past—before and after the industrial revolution—is the real home of capitalism.

Capitalism also, surprisingly, turns out to be irrational because it centered on speculation which, by definition, cannot be calculated. "It is important not to attribute to capitalism the virtues and 'rationalities' of the market economy itself—as even Marx and Lenin both do. . . ."

HENCE CAPITALISM, as Braudel defines it, is wholly repugnant. Or is it? For paradoxically, greedy capitalists were the persons who directed and redirected factors of production, sucking goods entering the market into long-distance trade nets, where really fat profits were mainly concentrated before the time of the industrial revolution. Financial speculation and credit manipulation, so abhorrent to Braudel's sense of propriety, nonetheless oiled


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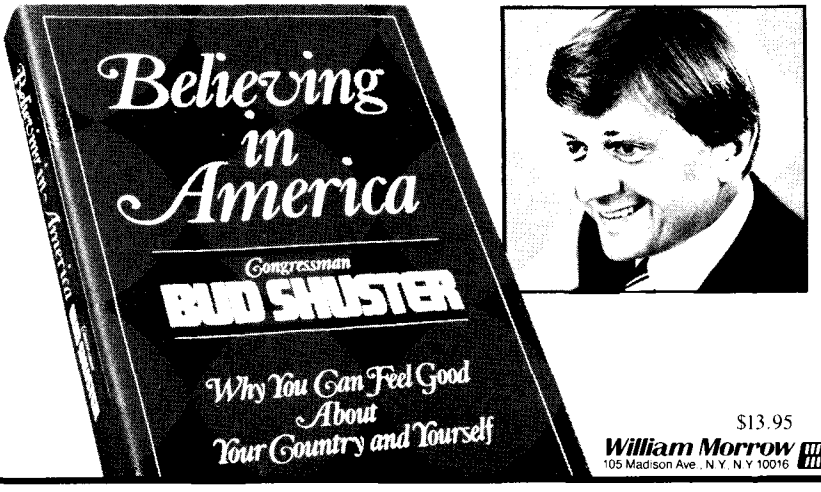




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the wheels of commerce. Capitalism, in fact, brought the world, kicking against its pricks and protesting all the while, toward modernity, with its global interdependence and unparalleled wealth. But Braudel merely refers to this aspect of capitalism here. His final and concluding volume promises to treat the theme historically. For now he is intent only on establishing his typology of commerce, apart from any definite locus in time and place, by distinguishing market behavior and face-to-face economic exchange from rapacious, capitalist manipulation of the market, acting impersonally and at a distance and largely by means of metaphysical "credit."

HAVING ELABORATED these distinctions in the first 450 pages of his book, Braudel then in chapter five comes to grips with "Society—a Set of Sets." Analysis of society becomes necessary because the capitalism Braudel is intent to anatomize flourished only in Europe, and indeed only in parts of that continent. There must be a reason for such a lopsided distribution, so in this final chapter he is intent on figuring out what it was in European society that allowed capitalism to take root and grow so luxuriantly. This quickly gets him into deep water. In particular, the relation between capitalism and the European state system bothers Braudel.

> Most important of all, should one go any further without giving a straightforward answer to the question that confronts us time and again: did the state or did it not promote capitalism, further its progress? . . . [T]he state undoubtedly encouraged capitalism and came to its rescue. But the formula can be reversed: the state also discouraged capitalism, which in return was capable of harming the interests of the state. Both statements could be true, one after another or simultaneously since real life is always complicated, in both predictable and unpredictable ways. Whether favorable or unfavorable, the modern state was one of the realities among which capitalism had to navigate, by turns helped or hindered, but often enough progressing through neutral territory.

Is such indecisive banality proof of wisdom and perspicacity? Or is it dodging the issue that lies at the center of any serious consideration of how Europe came to differ from other Eurasian civilizations in early modern times? Perhaps, indeed, it is both: a sign that Braudel is not prepared to sacrifice facts to a system of interpretation, even his own; and no less a sign that his system, by putting excessive weight on economic and pecuniary motives, is unable to explain the central phenomenon he addresses.

Insofar as the final chapter answers the question at all, it does so by suggesting—fleetingly and by indirection—that European society "encouraged the patient accumulation of wealth" in private hands across successive generations, whereas other Eurasian civilizations allowed tax collectors to confiscate privately held capital as soon as they detected any unusual private accumulation of liquid forms of wealth. This, however, takes us right back to the peculiar policies pursued by some European states, even though Braudel is not willing to accord any such import to mere politics. Capital is private; its accumulation is private; so private structures of society and patterns of behavior must have determined its emergence. The state and organized violence remain ambiguous or neutral and therefore negligible in Braudel's universe because he makes it an article of faith to believe that war and politics are merely superficial—the froth and scum of history, dashing against the rocks and tides of material life, market behavior, and capitalist exploitation.

NEEDLESS TO SAY, from the way I have presented Braudel's scheme, his dismissal of deliberate policy as a critical factor in determining what happened seems utterly unconvincing to me. The political and military setting within which economic exchange and pursuit of pecuniary gain takes place is as much determinative of human behavior as vice versa. Political will and deliberate marshaling of human effort in accordance with such will, can intervene and transform an existing pattern of economic relations, as any student of Russian or Japanese history ought to be ready to admit. Economics sets limits, of course; but with will and appropriate organization of effort such limits can be altered by command. On the other hand, when political rulers allow it, private pursuit of profit can also alter an economy and develop new possibilities with distinguished success, as any student of French or British history ought to recognize. But neither the one nor the other pattern of change is preclusive. Human beings are political and economic animals—always and everywhere. Any system of interpretation that fixes on one aspect of human behavior to the exclusion of the rest soon gets into the sort of difficulties that Braudel so engagingly admits to encountering when he sets out to explore society.

A SECOND serious limitation of Braudel's work is his concentration on Europe. At least four-fifths of what he has to say deals with that small peninsula; the rest of the world is merely background and counterfoil. Every so often he even inadvertently implies that France was equivalent to the entire world; and in one place he casually refers to "Europe which was so much ahead of the rest of the world . . . after about the eleventh or twelfth century. . . ." But Europe was *not* ahead of the rest of the world in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. China was, and remained so until at least the fifteenth century.

Braudel, indeed, entirely fails to recognize the commercial transformation that came to China on either side of the year 1000, when cheap internal transport, resulting from the construction of an extensive system of canals for irrigation purposes, allowed the Chinese to achieve a level of market activity previously attained only fleetingly and locally, e.g., by a handful of Greek commercial cities during the early classical age. The ceiling that Chinese trading broke through was to involve the peasant majority—some hundred million strong—in the market: ordinary peasants, as well as a growing population of townsmen, began to supplement what they could produce for themselves by buying and selling objects of everyday consumption. The result was to double China's population in a couple of centuries, with a corresponding enlargement of the country's wealth.

It was from this center of intensified commercial activity that the economic upswing of the eleventh century, so familiar in European history, took its initial impetus. Trade relations radiated outward from China across the Indian Ocean and beyond to the remote and backward Mediterranean lands, where Braudel's first love lay. They also radiated across the oases and grasslands of central Asia, transforming steppe life and persuading steppe raiders and rulers to adjust their predation to the needs of merchants and long-distance trade. China thus transformed the Eurasian world between 1000 and 1500



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A.D. almost as powerfully as Europe transformed that same world plus America and Africa after 1700. The market in everyday goods that Braudel celebrates so heartily had its greatest development in China, as any reader of Marco Polo ought to realize. Europe remained backward by comparison until well after 1500.

When Braudel looks beyond Europe he sees only Byzantium and Islam. He does devote a few pages to European borrowings from these neighbors, but his tone is one of trepidation and surprise.

> To admit the existence of those borrowings means turning one's back on traditional accounts of the history of the West as pioneering genius, spontaneous inventor, journeying alone along the road towards scientific and technical rationality. It means denying the claim of the medieval Italian city states to have invented the instruments of modern commercial life. And it logically culminates in denying the Roman Empire its role as the cradle of progress. For the much vaunted Empire . . . was only one part of an ancient world economy much greater than itself, which would outlast it by centuries.

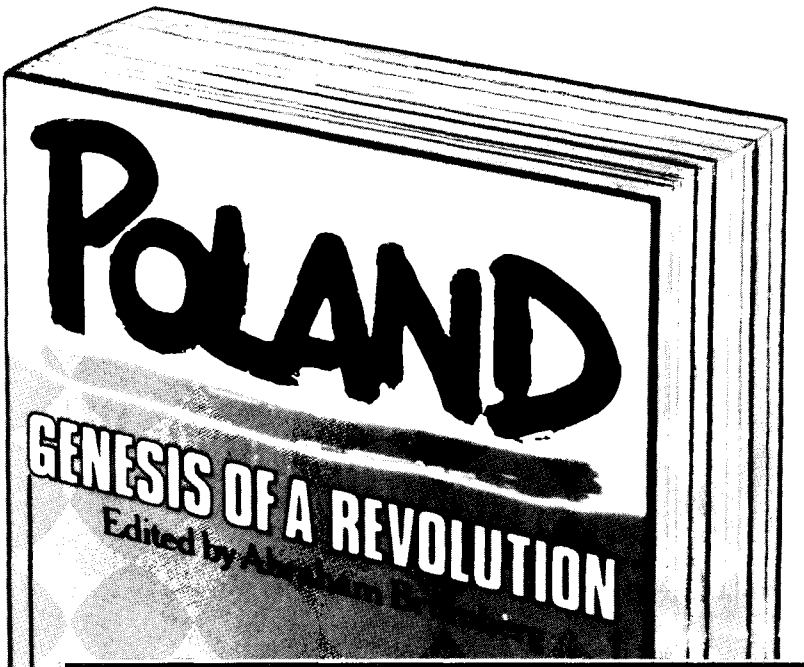
A world economy indeed: and one whose head and heart was firmly planted in China between 950 and 1450, though one would never guess the fact from Braudel's pages.

BUT TO HARP upon shortcomings is ungracious and uncalled for. My paraphrase and criticism of Braudel's effort at simplicity entirely fails to do justice to the charm and diversity of the book. The scheme is there, but mostly disappears amidst a luxuriance of curious information, exempla, and case studies. The chapters are spacious, and allow for innumerable byways. Braudel sustains an informal, discursive tone, delighting in oddments of information, such as the fact that in 1723 an Indian widow petitioned the Tsar's government to be allowed suttee and, after all the surviving Indian merchants threatened to withdraw from Moscow if the petition were not approved, she was duly allowed to immolate herself. "Let me open a parenthesis at this point and take the reader to a little village in Italy . . ." is entirely typical of the way Braudel pursues the pointillist technique he used so exquisitely in *The Mediterranean*. Oddments are here and in abundance; and for the ordinary reader this, I suspect, will be the principal fascination and reward of the book. It is no trivial reward, for the richness of human variety, as Braudel records it, is delightful indeed. The lively interest in humanity and its foibles that sustained his researches shines through the pages of his book, allowing others to share his pleasure in encountering something strange and new.

The remarkable thing about this work, therefore, is its combination of illustrative detail—visual, too, for the photographic plates are abundant and come from unexpected sources—with an entirely unusual breadth in time and space. This restrains and largely nullifies Braudel's effort to understand what happened by reducing everything to his eccentric typology. Instead we have a vastly erudite, miscellaneously discursive work that stimulates its readers to reflect upon the really important questions of the recent human past. Its very failures and limitations are provocative. What more can one ask? It is, therefore, a worthy successor to Braudel's first masterpiece, and confirms his rank as prince among living historians.

WILLIAM H. MCNEILL

William H. McNeill is professor of history at the University of Chicago, and author most recently of *The Pursuit of Power: Technology, Armed Force, and Society Since A.D. 1000* (University of Chicago Press).

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# WHAT ARE FAMILIES REALLY FOR?

## In Defense of the Family: Raising Children in America Today by Rita Kramer

(Basic Books, 263 pp., $15.50)

Rita Kramer believes that two parents are better than one; that these two parents should not be overawed by "experts" in child rearing; that infants and young children need the constant, special care of a single individual; that parents should assert and pass on their values without embarrassment; that there are major, biologically based differences between the sexes; that a child's emotional development should take priority over learning how to read at two; that effective child rearing demands a delicate balance of support and discipline; and that there are few tasks in the public world of work as important, as challenging, and ultimately as satisfying as raising a child. "The traditional nuclear family," she writes, "remains the chief agency—and the best one—for developing character . . . and for transmitting the values of the culture."

It is true that not everyone agrees with these beliefs. A few feminists have denounced the family as inherently patriarchal. For a wider circle of feminists, "traditional family" is a fighting term but largely because they equate it with a good deal more than Rita Kramer, whose definition ("a married couple of different sexes living with their children by blood or adoption"), at least at first blush, says nothing about the distribution of labor or authority and seems to do little more than exclude homosexual marriages and radical communal living arrangements. It is also true that long-standing rationalizations for female subordination led some social critics to minimize or deny all biologically based sex differences except those directly linked to reproduction. Time and the natural swing of scientific debate have brought a more balanced view. Today writers, such as Carol Gilligan (*In a Different Voice*), are as likely to assert the need for equal recognition of sexual differences as for equal recognition of common humanity.

Contrary to the impression that Kramer gives, most of her brave assertions are hardly "unfashionable"; in many instances, they are the staples of conventional child-care manuals. Since the mid-1950s, the much-maligned Dr. Spock has opened two editions of his handbook with the sentence, "You know more than you think you do." His first pages have always stressed the incomparable importance and satisfaction of child rearing. The degree to which other establishment literature emphasizes the irreplaceable role of the mother or differences between boys and girls in psychosexual development or parental insistence on standards of behavior may vary somewhat, but these efforts to strike a common-sense balance are not nearly as far from Rita Kramer's own views as she repeatedly implies.

Much the same can be said of her other opinions. On TV: "about all that can be said for television as a diversion for children is that it beats public executions." On books: teen novels and Judy Blume are trash; fairy tales and Robert Louis Stevenson are better. On trying to stop little boys from playing with guns: don't bother, it's futile. She might get an argument here or there on one or another of these points, but not, we expect, any shoot-outs along ideological lines.

Why, then, does this book carry such a chip on its shoulder? For good reason, as it turns out. Amidst the strands of plausible, indeed often common-sense advice, Kramer weaves a distinctive message, and she is right to anticipate opposition. Her case consists of three major points, each presented in opposition to specific "enemies":

First, mothers should be at home full-time for the first three years of a child's life and after that preferably work part-time for an indefinite but extended period. Here, the chief enemy is the "feminist logic that sends mothers of young children out of the home to fulfill themselves."

Second, successful child rearing requires a strong emphasis on gender identity and sexual differences. Parents should be "unequivocally of opposite sexes"; mother is soft, father tough; she is "nurturing," he is "effective." The enemies are feminists, again, and unidentified political reformers seeking "a society in which as few distinctions as possible remain between individuals or groups." One of the book's recurrent concerns is the danger of gender confusion and homosexuality.

Third, schools should stick to teaching "skills"; in particular, they should not promote sex education and "values clarification" programs calculated to undermine traditional family values. The enemies here are professional sex educators; Harvard educational psychologist Lawrence Kohlberg and his influential theory about stages of moral reasoning; Sidney Simon and other gurus of "values clarification"; and "cultural relativists" in general.

TO SUPPORT her views Kramer wheels into place a familiar Freudian model of child development in which toilet training, masturbation, and the delicate dramas of unrequited sexual passion for Mom and Dad are the outstanding events. For some, that model is as much established scientific truth as the Copernican model of the solar system. To others, it remains a fascinating artifact of modern intellectual life, suggestive in some of its broad assertions, but quaint in its details and distressing in its dogmatism. It is interesting to know that the athletic endeavors of nine-year-old boys have "an obvious although disguised masturbatory quality"; and even more interesting to learn of their sisters that "thoughts of dirtiness and messiness, fears of losing control of the products of their bodies . . . sometimes interfere with girls' capacity to concentrate on abstract problem-solving, particularly those [sic] dealing with spatial concepts and mathematics." Woe to the person (e.g., Lawrence Kohlberg) who doesn't recognize that adolescent "idealism" is probably only "reaction formation" in view of "the great upsurge of instinctual energy that accompanies hormonal changes." Nor will the reader miss that dynamic duo, Castration Anxiety and Penis Envy, modestly dressed in playtogs terminology—little boy toddlers worried about losing their "anatomical difference" and little girl toddlers suffering a sense of loss over "something others have and they do not." Kramer will have no hanging back. "Only extreme naiveté or doctrinal blindness" would lead anyone to skepticism about this ac-



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count. She warns parents against the claims of experts and authorities but not, of course, *her* experts and authorities.

Even sympathizers with this Freudian schema will otherwise find that Kramer makes her specific arguments without measure or accuracy. It is no exaggeration to say that her book is a diatribe against feminism, which is never mentioned except disparagingly. There is not the least acknowledgement that feminists have addressed any real problems. Having taken the position that women in their twenties and thirties should absent themselves from the world of full-time work for at least a decade, Kramer does not deign to address the issues this raises about the entire life pattern of women. Likewise her determination to rebut dogmatic denials of all biologically based sex differences is nowhere balanced by an admission that sexual stereotypes have been a source of individual anguish and stultification as well as of social waste—for men as well as women.

MOVING to her third point, Kramer presents examples of sex-education texts that are truly atrocious and of efforts at "values clarification" that range from vapid to pernicious. Often such liberal indoctrination is all the more obnoxious for masking itself under the guise of neutrality or respect for differing viewpoints. Kramer is right in criticizing such programs, but is she right in making them the focus of her section on education? How typical, for example, is the sex-education text by Gary F. Kelly that casually accepts bestiality and sadomasochism among a variety of "other preferences"? Kramer says that this example was "chosen at random from the library shelves of a New York City school." Well, maybe. But hers is now the third discussion we have seen pinpoint exactly the same objectionable passage in this randomly chosen book. Considering the amount of space Kramer gives to the menace of sex education and "values clarification," it hardly seems responsible not to provide any information about the percentage of schools that currently provide or require such courses—or indeed offer any sex education at all.

Kramer is no more responsible in her treatment of Lawrence Kohlberg. We too find Kohlberg's theory of universal stages of moral reasoning seriously wanting, but Kramer simply traduces it. Anyone reading a serious critique of Kohlberg, like that by William M. Sullivan in *Reconstructing Public Philosophy* realizes that the problems Kohlberg addresses, however unsatisfactorily, are real ones, rooted not in the '60s radicalism that Kramer wants to identify him with but in traditional liberalism. Again, Kramer does not acknowledge that. Her own grasp of moral theory is demonstrated when she simultaneously accuses Kohlberg of moral absolutism and "moral relativism"—and equates the latter with "the rejection of conventional moral reasoning." Socrates would not have stood a chance with her, quite apart from his sexual proclivities.

Kohlberg is only one of the people Kramer burdens with pursuing a "political purpose," serving a "political ideology," or promoting a "political agenda." She, of course, has none.

The reality is quite the contrary. *In Defense of the Family* is written for a particular audience, assumes a particular background, and urges its own particular politics. In the mid-1970s Midge Decter wrote a book, called *Liberal Parents, Radical Children*. She spoke as "a member of America's professional, or enlightened, liberal middle class." Her book was a lament for the children of that class; a tale of college dropouts, of taking up farming in Vermont, of returning from farming in Vermont, of drug use and unstable liaisons and repeated flings at graduate school, of trips to ashrams and marginal employment as house painters and taxi drivers. It was a tale, on one level, simply of downward mobility and the disappointments thereof:

> As children of this peculiar enlightened class, you were expected one day to be manning a more than proportional share of the positions of power and prestige in this society: you were to be its executives, its professionals, its artists and intellectuals . . . you were to think its influential thoughts, tend its major institutions, reap its highest rewards.

On another level, it was a lament for squandered talents and for less ambitious hopes, namely that the children "would grow up . . . and . . . carry forward the normal human business of mating, home-building, and reproducing—replacing us, in other words." But if *Liberal Parents, Radical Children* was a merciless flaying of the "radical" chil-


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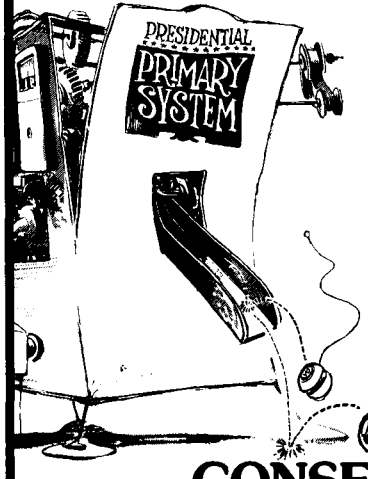


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dren of Midge Decter's class, it was also a reproach to the "liberal" parents for their soft surrender of the knotty wisdom of the past for the mush of modern enlightenment.

Of course, some of the children finally did emerge from those dark days, and finished law school, and went to work for foundations or the government—and it is for them, and for their younger sisters and brothers, now embarking on child rearing themselves, that Kramer has written her book, so that they will not repeat their parents' errors, so that they and their class will not again be subjected to the terrors and dashed hopes of the '60s. Her preoccupation with this relatively narrow stratum and its special problems is expressed in dozens of ways. There is the extraordinary outburst, for example, when a footnote on Kohlberg suddenly links his Kantian concern for universal principles of justice to

> the spoiled children of the sixties who eventually became vicious criminals of the eighties—robbers and killers in the name of the universal abstract principles of justice their civil-rights-advocate and legal-defense-lawyer parents, their liberal clergymen and social studies teachers had encouraged.

And it is clear that the "middle-class" readers to whom this book is addressed are only peripherally those for whom financial constraints might have a real bearing on choices about child rearing, or those who might actually suffer from a want or an ignorance of professional assistance rather than from a surfeit of it. This is an audience for whom there is nothing incongruous in identifying "traditional values" with psychoanalytic doctrine but for whom slightly older forms of religion must be approached very tentatively: Sometimes, writes Kramer, child rearing

> calls for new ways of looking at life. For instance, even if you are not religious yourself, think twice before abandoning the idea of a form of religious training for children that stresses the idea of a benign cosmogony and the role of holidays in celebrating community with others and the round of the seasons in nature. A religious outlook, as long as it is not a punitive one, may serve many phase-related needs for the young child. . . . Formal beliefs can be outgrown and discarded later, or adapted in some more personal way. . . .

There is always something amusing about universal prescriptions based on the experience and outlook of a narrow social group. Kramer, for example, and Decter too, always portray the choice to be childless as a hedonistic, selfish one—an assumption that seems odd to those who grew up in a milieu where every parochial schoolchild's image of a life of sacrifice involved celibacy. But there is something angering about this narrow class view, too. If having a mother at home is really as crucial for the development of preschool children as Kramer argues, then she ought to demand significant alterations in the situation of the vast number of American women who are economically constrained to work outside the home. Rather than do so, however, Kramer merely asserts that infants and young children of such mothers will spontaneously recognize that there is no "choice" and, apparently, escape the unfortunate consequences of maternal absence.

And finally there is probably something self-defeating about Kramer's enterprise. It resembles all too closely the family that was supposed to have created all the "radical children" in the first place. "We have exquisite goals for our children," writes Kramer,

> both in terms of characters and accomplishments—and only the subtlest interactions between them and us can elicit—and not always, even with the best of understanding care—what we want.

Mother hovers over Jonathan, hoping for "optimal development" and looking forward to the day when "he can prepare himself for the higher levels of work and for the professions"; she sends him off for religious training to imbibe a "benign cosmogony" and "formal beliefs" she doesn't believe in herself but which "may serve many phase-related needs." It sounds like a recipe for disaster. It probably isn't—but only because of the many sensible things that Kramer has in common with a host of other advisers on child rearing, and not those which she alone advocates.

IN THE END, one has to question how well Kramer has thought through the underlying argument of her book, expressed in the relationship between its title and subtitle. Along with other writers, she is saying that although the family may have lost the political, protective, productive, and even educational functions it possessed in former times, it still remains the best incubator of character and creativity. As such, it must be defended against the feminists, bureaucrats, academics, and reformers who would rashly and disastrously turn this remaining function over to day-care centers and schools.

But how thoroughgoing a "defense of the family" can be mounted purely on the grounds that the family is the most successful agency for child rearing? How much of what we mean by family, especially traditional family, can be understood in those terms? One obvious drawback, exemplified by Kramer's book, is that such a strategy says nothing at all about other family relationships and obligations—among siblings, between adult children and their parents, even between spouses. Oddly enough, although Kramer insists on the need for *two* parents, she has little to say about what might keep them together.

BUT THERE IS an even more basic problem with this line of defense. It may tell us how families are better for our children, if we have children, than state-run nurseries. It leaves unanswered, however, the question of why we should have children in the first place. Do we do it to raise little creatures who will resemble ourselves? Or because children are "fun"? Or because sculpting personalities out of such unpromising raw material is deeply satisfying? All those things may be true, but they strike us as insufficient reasons, morally, to explain and later to guide what we embark upon when we become parents. If those are our reasons, they are not all that different from the expressions of narcissism and the quests for self-fulfillment that family defenders so roundly deplore.

In two provocative essays in *A Community of Character*, theologian Stanley Hauerwas has argued that

> we lack the moral and linguistic skills to express adequately . . . what we do in families. More importantly . . . the moral language our culture supplies tends to distort the very experiences we are trying to describe.

Maybe that is why magazine articles on child rearing often have the same tone as magazine articles on interior decoration or home maintenance. Or why Kramer's book seems to share the same moral premises as those she considers



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to be antifamily. Don't be fooled by feminist advertising, she is saying, the traditional family is a better purchase, and staying at home a better long-term investment strategy, than pursuing a career and relying on day care. But what if the returns don't come in—the spouse changes; the infant is retarded and will never blossom into the "autonomous individual" Kramer envisions; the family finances make "optimal development" a fantasy; an adult son or daughter, an aging parent, a brother or cousin is in trouble and needs help? Family is precisely that which does not cope with these situations as one would with an investment.

Hauerwas believes that the only way to make moral sense out of family is to see it as part of some larger community, a community that exists over time.

> For marriage to be sustained today we need a sense of contributing to a people through having children. . . . We must have the conviction that the family represents a vocation necessary for a people who have a mission and yet have learned to be patient.

If there is any sense in which Rita Kramer sets the family within the larger context of a "people," the people turn out to be only that "peculiar enlightened class" whose children are "expected one day to be manning a more than proportional share of the positions of power and prestige in this society." Kramer would obviously like to see those offspring raised to meet their eventual managerial responsibilities, to steer our technology confidently toward a better world for us all. But as she sounds the note of "traditional" again and again, and as she brushes aside the less exalted needs of many Americans, and as she looks askance at virtually all recent expressions of social change, and as she praises "the virtues . . . associated with capitalism and the bourgeoisie," one gets an unsettling impression of exactly what she envisions that "people's" primary mission to be: to stay on top.

PETER STEINFELS &
MARGARET O'BRIEN STEINFELS

Peter Steinfels, executive editor of *Commonweal*, is author of *The Neoconservatives: The Men Who Are Changing America's Politics* (Simon and Schuster). Margaret O'Brien Steinfels, executive editor of *Christianity & Crisis*, is author of *Who's Minding the Children? The History and Politics of Day Care in America* (Simon and Schuster).

# THE BIRTH OF THE BAROQUE

## Circa 1600: A Revolution of Style in Italian Painting by S. J. Freedberg

(Harvard University Press, 126 pp., $25)

The language of seeing, like the history of taste, is a complicated and frustrating study. We cannot, it seems, read the visual evidence of works of art apart from the cultural bias we carry with us. True art history is our only corrective and for that we need the guidance of historians who are objective rather than partisan (as critics tend to be). We need them to tell us what actually happened and, if they can, why.

Old master paintings are immensely complex phenomena. They are, first of all, brush strokes manipulating paint on a surface; they depict a certain subject, they express a given theory of art, they convey a mood, they reflect the artist's private psychological state and personality, they carry the weight of the political and religious impulses of their time, and, finally, they derive from the whole tradition of art that preceded them.

For most connoisseurs of the past 150 years, the art most difficult to like and to understand was Italian Baroque painting with its Counter-Reformation subject matter of gory martyrdoms, its rhetorical repertoire of theatrical gestures and poses, its dark *tenebroso* lighting, or its garish color harmonies. Ear-


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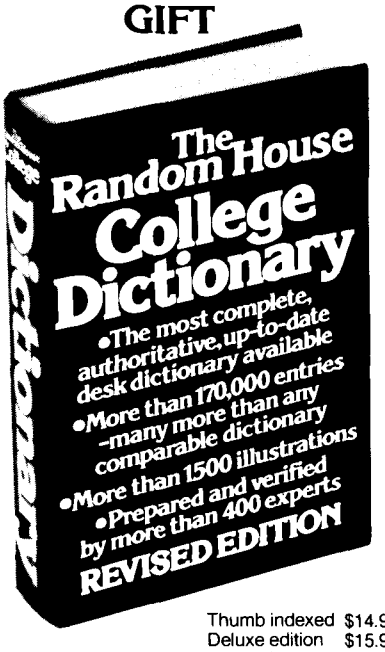
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lier American museum collecting, influenced so greatly first by Ruskin, then Berenson, ignored this kind of painting almost totally.

Today we are able to look more comfortably and intelligently at Baroque painting and its sources, thanks to the work of art historians like Professor Sydney Freedberg, the author of this exemplary slim volume of lecture-essays about three of the creators of the new style that appeared around the year 1600. Freedberg is exactly the sort of guide we need. He does not merely dazzle us with his immense apparatus of learning, but keeps bringing us back again and again to the works of art. He makes us look at what the artist is doing by formal analysis and by finding verbal equivalents for the mood, atmosphere, and psychological intensity of the work. In fact, Professor Freedberg's language is a special experience in itself. What seems at first somewhat frothy and overblown becomes severe and precise when one troubles to analyze a sentence more exactly. Here is Freedberg discussing Annibale Carracci's borrowings from Correggio:

> Annibale's adaptation of the motifs signifies less, however, than his response to Correggio's handling of surface, a *sfumato* that makes presence seem as if it should be palpable, and which inspires in flesh a quasi-erotic magnetism, appealing to the visually experienced quality of touch. Annibale's figures remain, however, more earthbound than Correggio's, affirming their actuality of substance, and it is this weighing physicality of Annibale's persons that moderates a borrowed Correggesque temper of complex excitement in the whole design.

Annibale Carracci is the subject of the first of Freedberg's three essays about the innovators who renewed art and opened the age of the Baroque. The second essay concerns Michelangelo Caravaggio, and the third, Ludovico Carracci, Annibale's cousin, sometime collaborator, and ultimately a very different artist.

THE CARRACCI, particularly, were neglected by modern polite taste, notwithstanding that they organized in Bologna the first "Academy of Art" whose strictures about technique and craft, as well as the example of their masterworks, dominated the practice of "official" painting at least until the end of the eighteenth century. Annibale was the genius of the family and his frescos for the Farnese Gallery in Rome long ranked with Michelangelo's and Raphael's as the pinnacle of art. Yet, only in 1971 did the Metropolitan Museum finally acquire a Carracci—a decent but not major work.

THE GREAT sixteenth century in Italy produced a turbulence of richness in art from Raphael, Michelangelo, and Fra Bartolommeo of the Classical High Renaissance in Florence and Rome through the Venetian masters, Titian, Veronese, and Tintoretto, along with myriads of lesser figures from other Italian centers and émigrés from North Europe. By the third quarter of the century, in spite of (or perhaps because of) the richness of the tradition of examples, art had grown effete, artificial, and contrived. Reality was scorned and composition as well as iconography strained to be as implausible as possible, and elegance rather than truth was the ideal.

All this Annibale reacted against as Freedberg guides us to see, step by step, altarpiece by altarpiece. Such developments, however, are not strictly linear; we are reminded that the rejected *maniera* kept creeping back in both the Carracci's work, only to be assimilated in further progress toward the new vision. Our cultivated docent shows us that the eclectic borrowings for which Annibale was so denigrated by past historians were, in fact, a return to Classical probity and rational order. Yet, for modern eyes, trained on Picasso and the Abstract Expressionists, Annibale must remain an "official" painter. Out of the same Venetian sources and Counter-Reformation seriousness of emotional truth, at the very same time but in another place, El Greco created an art of more dynamic visual poetry which we are destined to prefer.

However, in Freedberg's second essay we have in Caravaggio an existential being, an underground man in some sense, who fits the rubrics of twentieth century understanding. He was violent, street-wise, homosexual, a loner, connected to no academies or court. He created a new kind of realism, starting with personal, provocative, almost obscene images of his fantasies in reaction against the dominant mannerism; later in his short life, he painted religious subjects in a kind of serene, factual, hyper-realism that is almost palpable. In his last years, fleeing from a murder charge, he created several paintings, obsessed with death, one of which Freedberg says "is so blunt that it is as if in it Caravaggio should have renounced art, wanting to do no more than give mute voice in his canvas to the suffering of a common humanity."

Freedberg, in the framework of this short essay, does not discuss the enormous fallout of Caravaggio's style over the rest of Europe. But, of course, he exerted a tremendous influence over legions of artists of whom Georges De La Tour, early Rembrandt, Zurbaran, and Vermeer are only some of the better known examples.

HERE, PERHAPS, one feels a sense of something missing from this book. While Freedberg's text is pitched high, implying an audience of graduate students in art history, and his arguments leading us into the matter and form of individual pictures and of each artist's development are subtle and intricate, the whole lacks context. The intelligent reader, not coming fresh from art history classes, would welcome an introduction and an epilogue to these three lectures—the introduction giving a sense of the triumphant and complacent Counter-Reformation at this period, the art politics of Rome, the quality of patronage, and the conclusion telling of the historic aftereffects of the Carraccian and Caravaggian revolution. One wishes Freedberg had pointed readers toward Poussin, Vouet, Rubens, and Murillo the better to understand what was begun circa 1600.

In the case of Annibale, one misses also a discussion of the development of the heroic landscape, nature arranged by logic and sensibility—a new impulse in art—which has reverberated until almost our own time. But these caveats are merely a wish that we had even more of Sydney Freedberg's eloquent voice in this little book. His is one of the best we have, and his exposition of this difficult and critical moment in art history is, to use one of his favorite words, "classical."

**EUGENE VICTOR THAW**

Eugene Victor Thaw is a private art dealer in New York. Coauthor of *Jackson Pollock: A Catalogue Raisonné of Paintings, Drawings, and Other Works* (Yale University Press), he occasionally writes about art.



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# A Greek Heroine

## Eleni
## by Nicholas Gage

(Random House, 470 pp., $15.95)

When Nicholas Gage was made Eastern Mediterranean Correspondent of *The New York Times* in 1977, he was surprised, upon taking up his post in Athens, at the political mentality prevalent among Greek university students. The students, born in the 1950s and 1960s, romanticized the Communist guerrillas who had risen against the Greek government in 1946, plunging the country into a vicious civil war that lasted until 1949, when the guerrillas were defeated and driven into exile in the surrounding Communist states. Mr. Gage had good reason to be surprised. The guerrillas had starved and beaten the people of his native village. They had taken children from their families and sent them to be raised behind the Iron Curtain. They had impressed the young women and used them as cannon fodder in their "people's war." In a final bit of deviltry, they had forced the villagers to abandon their homes and accompany them into exile in Albania. And for helping her children to escape from the village, they had tried, tortured, and executed Eleni Gatzoyiannis, Mr. Gage's mother.

The Greek students glamorized the guerrillas; their elders pardoned them and legalized the Communist Party. In 1981 the new Socialist government even went so far as to agree to Communist demands to abstain from official memorial services for civil war victims. It was as if the whole country wanted to forget. Mr. Gage decided to make it remember. He resigned from the *Times* to search for his mother's murderers, and to memorialize her life and record his quest in this book. It tells an unforgettable story.

Eleni Haitis was nineteen when Christos Gatzoyiannis first approached her father, a miller in Lia, a village in extreme northwestern Greece near the Albanian border. By that time, Christos was an American. He wore fashionable American clothes and was said to be prosperous. She was happy he had asked for her hand. Her father, a hard and selfish man, set a condition to their marriage which would one day cost her life: he demanded that she stay in the village to care for her aging parents. Her husband, who ran a fruit business in Worcester, Massachusetts, would send her money from America. She agreed. It was the responsibility of married daughters to support their parents. Moreover it was not uncommon for husbands in the Mourgana villages to be away a year at a time, supporting their families from jobs elsewhere in Greece. Christos, who had emigrated from Lia years before, would merely extend this custom to America. They were married in 1928. A child followed immediately. Several visits during the 1930s brought three more, all girls. At last a 1938 visit produced a boy, Nikola. It was to be Christos's final visit. He left before his son was born and did not see him until 1949. He never saw his wife again.

For nine years the tides of war and revolution broke over Eleni and her five children. First the Italians invaded Greece, and were beaten back. Then in 1941 Hitler unleashed his air force, his parachutists, and his panzer divisions. This time there was no hope of resistance: on April 27, 1941, the swastika was run up over the Acropolis. Hitler had seized Greece to shore up his southern flank for the coming invasion of Russia. Nearly 10 percent of the Greek population would die for this flank during the German occupation. In Athens alone, in the winter of 1941-42, 300,000 people starved to death. And in distant Lia the women hiked over mountains to the sea, harvested sacks of salt, then hiked over more mountains to trade the salt for corn in Albania.

On the heels of war came revolution. During the occupation two resistance groups sprang up; they fought each other more than they did the Germans. One was Communist; Mr. Gage inadequately identifies the other only as "rightist." The Communists occupied Lia. They were led by two brothers, both schoolteachers, men who let one fingernail grow long to show that they did not work with their hands. At first the guerrillas entertained the villagers with propaganda skits dramatizing the wickedness of the rightists. Then they showed the real face of revolution. A boy was beaten, a church desecrated, an "informer" assassinated. The sons of the village were conscripted and thrown into battle. There were "compulsory gatherings" and, after the rightists briefly occupied the village, mass arrests. "The dream of revolution and freedom painted by the Skevis brothers had turned into a nightmare, and fear settled over the village."


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"COLMAN MCCARTHY of the *Washington Post* rather surprisingly (at first glance) complained that Brokaw had been *too* outspoken, 'running off at the mouth'. What *could* McCarthy mean? Surely he agreed with nearly everything Brokaw said. Ah...Brokaw should have been 'above the *overt* taking of sides' (our emphasis). He was 'indiscreet'. Reporters can fight the good fight, but not too obviously. They should keep the message implicit, so as to retain 'public trust' without arousing 'suspicion'. Gotcha, Colman."

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Late in 1944 the Germans retreated from Greece. But war continued, with the Communist guerrillas attacking the British troops who had just arrived to liberate the country. The guerrillas also embarked on an assassination campaign to eliminate their political opponents, killing "13,500 Greeks in three weeks, twice as many of their own countrymen as the number of Germans killed in Greece during three years of occupation." In February 1945 the British and Greek government troops finally broke the Communist assault on Athens. Defeated, the guerrillas fled across the mountains to Yugoslavia. A year of peace followed.

For the first time in five years, Eleni was able to get a letter to her husband: "The war has taught me how wrong it is for us to be apart. In America, houses are not burned and people do not starve to death. I beg you to arrange passage at once. I ask you with my whole heart." Christos sent money for the trip to America, but Eleni used most of it to buy a dowry for her eldest daughter. The girl needed a spot of happiness, and hadn't her husband warned her that America was no place to bring up an eligible daughter? Meanwhile, the months ticked away.

In March 1946 the civil war broke out again. Soon there were rumors that the guerrillas might return to Lia. Worried, Eleni wrote Christos asking if she should leave the village for the safety of the provincial capital. He commanded her to stay. Who were the guerrillas, he wrote, if not "fellow villagers, some of them, fighting for their rights. . . . Why should they bother my family?" He was her husband; she obeyed his wishes.

In November 1947 the guerrillas reoccupied Lia. The war was not going well for them and they needed scapegoats. The villagers had always resented Eleni's American connection, and this ill will intensified with the promulgation of the Truman Doctrine in 1946 and the dispatch of American military aid and advisers to Greece. Eleni became the target of village gossip and Communist suspicion. She had, when the guerrillas arrived, only ten months to live. She spent them taking desperate measures to keep her family intact. For example, to prevent her oldest daughter from being conscripted, she burned the girl's foot. (It didn't help; the guerrillas only took a younger daughter.) And when she heard rumors that the young children of the village (her Nikola!) were to be shipped behind the Iron Curtain, she laid plans for an escape. In the event, she stayed behind to locate a missing daughter. But the escape attempt, thrillingly told by Mr. Gage, who owes his life to it, worked.

ELENI was arrested, and in a rigged public trial she and four other villagers were charged with abetting the escape. Tortured, they confessed. Then they were taken to a place of execution. A witness remembers hearing

> . . . a woman's voice, the most terrible sound she had ever heard. The harsh cry contained all the sorrow and pain of the universe and it formed itself into words 'My children!' Then there was a volley of shots.

Hungry for justice, Mr. Gage searched for and found the judge in Eleni's trial. The villagers had known him only by the name Katis, which means judge, but by exercising his talents as an investigative reporter, Mr. Gage located him: an old man living with his family. The statute of limitations on war crimes having expired, there were no legal sanctions Gage could use against him. He therefore resolved to follow the venerable attic script of revenge and kill his mother's killer. But when he had the chance, he couldn't. Eleni's spirit seemed to forbid it. Her last words had been a cry of love, not vengeance.

*Eleni* is a remarkably successful work of "faction," that marriage of fact and fiction literary purists are always trying to put asunder. Mr. Gage uses fictional techniques—inventing dialogue, thoughts, and feelings—to bring out the full truth of this book's terrible and noble facts. The bulk of *Eleni* is a novelistic re-creation of his mother's experience during nine hard years. This narrative surface is broken only very occasionally by passages recording Mr. Gage's memories of specific events, and by introductions to the many chapters which fill in the larger historical and political picture. Some readers may distrust Mr. Gage's fictional touches, but I found they enhanced my sense that this was a true story. It was Mr. Gage's first-person coda on his search for Katis, which was presumably straight reporting, that seemed falsely melodramatic to me, marred by the breathless conventions of investigative journalism.

### MY FATHER IN THE BASEMENT

Something had gone wrong down in the basement.
Something important needed rearranging
Or shaping up down there like the neat shadows
He kept in the coalbin and under the workbench.
But when he went to find it, he couldn't find it.

None of the fuses had blown as dark as storms
At their tiny portholes. Nothing was on fire
But the fire in the furnace, and nothing was frozen
But the humming freezer and the concrete floor
And the hands he'd poured it with, now cold and hard.

Had his mother sent him here to fetch crab-apples,
Spicy and gold, or piccalilli for supper?
Was that his father shouting and then turning
A deaf ear to his answer? It was cold
And hard to remember why he wasn't working.

So he lay down on the floor, doing things right
The first time because nothing was worth doing
Unless he did it himself. There was no use
In calling strangers if something was out of order
Because if he couldn't fix it, nobody could.

DAVID WAGONER



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*Eleni* is an immense and varied book, yet not without a plan. In my reading its myriad details clustered around three themes. One is the iron grip of culture. Anthropologists tell us that we should think of culture as an extrinsic set of genes. Eleni's life and death illustrate the reach as well as the limits of this thesis. From her decision to remain in Greece and tend to her aging parents, to her reluctance to send her daughters to a country where their virtue could not be guaranteed, to her fatal acquiescence in her husband's command to stay in Lia, Eleni's destiny was ruled by the customs and mores of her culture. The book records her submission to these forces, but it also shows her growing autonomy. Seen in this light, the escape was not only an act of defiance against the Communists but also a heroic break with the habits of dependence and resignation that were prescribed for Greek peasant women. And this victory of selfhood was not won at the expense of her children; on the contrary, it secured their safety. Within months of the escape, they were in America.

THE SECOND THEME is the sheer diabolism of the guerrillas. Like the forces of Pol Pot in Cambodia, the Greek Communists were bent on destroying the villagers' whole way of life. In a region where the purity of women was the paramount social obsession, the guerrillas conscripted single young women; worse, they made them serve beside single young men; worse still, they forced them to wear pants. It sounds harmless enough to us, but it horrified the villagers. The kidnapping of little children (and it would be years before they would be returned to Greece), the confiscation of dowries, the trashing of churches and the killing of priests—these were tactical mistakes, to be sure; they did not help the Communists win any hearts and minds. But in a larger sense they weren't mistakes at all. They represented the Communists' positive program. After all, the village culture was not progressive; it was shot through with superstition and ignorance. How could the Communists create a new society from this unpromising material? Better to wipe the slate clean and start fresh with the children. Tamerlane razed villages and abducted children, too, but no one ever called him an agent of progress. It is not such cruelties that make our age unique but the cant used to justify them.

The third theme, Eleni's heroism, is the main subject of the book, and it emerges in bold relief when set against the other two themes. Before the war Eleni had been sickly, what we might call neurasthenic. Adversity toughened her, quickened her with guile; paradoxically, it also deepened the wells of her love. She fought her culture and the guerrillas, and she won both battles. Granted, the village culture gave strong support to maternal self-sacrifice. But that it gave her strength in some areas only made her resistance to it in others more difficult. By her conduct in these years, she preserved the human ideal from the general wreckage.

It's tempting to compare Eleni to literary heroines—Antigone, say, or Brecht's Mother Courage (an agitprop cartoon next to Eleni). Tempting, but wrong. Literary suffering is always tailored. It accustoms us to the idea that difficulty and the courage to meet it come only at the right moment in the plot—here the crisis, there the climax. But a look at life as it is really lived reveals something different—constant crises, in some lives at any rate, and lots of tragic choices. This essentially nonfiction book replicates the relentless unraveling of life far better than a play or novel could. It is as if we accompany Eleni to all the stations of her cross, not just to a representative few as we would in a novel; and so when we reach her Calvary, we are overwhelmed by pity and terror at all that she has endured. I can think of no higher praise of this book than to say that it is fit to stand as a monument to Eleni Gatzoyiannis.

JACK BEATTY

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CORRESPONDENCE, *from page 4*

whom have never even been to South Africa, in which the writer tries to describe that complex society. Invariably, these non-South African writers, whether sympathetic and caring or supercilious and critical, are unable to accurately describe the situation in South Africa.

Thomas Nagel stands out as an exception to the rule ("A Month In the Country," TNR, March 14). In the relatively short period he spent in South Africa, he captured the atmosphere with great sensitivity. His description of life at the universities, including my alma mater, Wits, shows an insight which heretofore I believed could only be acquired by growing up in South Africa and being intimately involved in politics in the universities. Mr. Nagel's description of Helen Suzman's thirtieth annual report to her constituents was so accurate and insightful that I recalled, with some discomfort, how we young liberals used to laugh without mirth at how much easier it was for us northern-suburbs-Jews to be liberal than it was for Afrikaners like Frederik van Zyl Slabbert.

Intellectuals can do much more for the suppressed blacks in South Africa by visiting and writing about that beautiful and tortured country than by boycotting it as many have suggested he should have done.

JACOB BURLAND
*San Mateo, California*

## WASHINGTON'S ETHICS

*To the editors:*

Your recent coverage of Chicago's election makes me wonder how much your staff really knows about the city ("Chicago Squeaker," TNR, May 2). If we place Harold Washington's personal problems in the context of the city's political history they seem very small indeed.

For example, Mayor Daley thought it was appropriate to give a significant portion of the city's insurance contracts to his son's firm. There has also been a continuing tradition of the Mayor's allies, chief fundraisers, and political advisers taking advantage of their positions to direct city contracts and consulting fees to firms that they and their relatives control.

This has represented a systematic diversion of city revenues, as well as being grossly inefficient, given the absence of competitive bidding. In this context, Harold Washington's personal financial problems, amounting to less than $1,000 dollars, seem very small indeed.

To a skeptical observer, the obsessive concern with this issue is evidence of either racism, or of an extremely selective moral posture, one which has curiously only emerged when a serious black candidate is involved.

ANTOINE JOSEPH
*Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*



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**TRB**, *from page 6*

Progress in the early 1960s, America briefly pursued a balanced policy of reform and hemispheric defense. J.F.K. was revered in Latin villages where today Ronald Reagan is more likely to be reviled. If the United States had opposed the 1972 military coup which overthrew an elected Christian Democratic government in El Salvador, there would be no armed insurrection there now. We have time in the rest of Central and Latin America to seek a third way between fascism and communism, to support governments that can command popular support and the will to defend themselves. This is a first priority in Guatemala, or that country will shortly become the next Nicaragua or El Salvador.

In El Salvador itself, the only realistic option is a negotiated settlement—precarious, but probably the best of a bad bargain in the absence of a readiness to send American troops. In Nicaragua, too, the negotiating process should be renewed; in April 1981, the Sandinistas were reportedly ready to cut off weapons shipments to the Salvadoran guerrillas, but not to put the promise in writing. So the Reagan Administration rejected the agreement and ended economic aid to Nicaragua. Maybe it's time to try again. Covert operations swiftly become overt; they can't be conducted both secretly and successfully. We may have to accept a "Socialist" Nicaragua as a sort of Central American Yugoslavia, but if the Sandinistas insist on acting as a Soviet satellite or surrogate, then we can oppose them openly—and ultimately even to the point of supporting an armed insurgency, so long as the explicit purpose is to achieve a democratic government, not a Somocista reincarnation of past repression.

For some, a third way in Central America will be less satisfying than the Administration's thirst for confrontation. For others, it will lack the neat finality of deciding that withdrawal is always the answer and revolution is never unacceptable. But the real lesson of Vietnam cannot be that America will prevail anywhere if only we try hard enough—or at the other extreme, that we are doomed to defeat, whatever the place, time, or circumstance. The real lesson is that a great power must be mature enough to adopt practical and proportionate policies. We've got to be tough-minded, not simple-minded.

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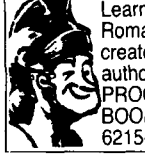

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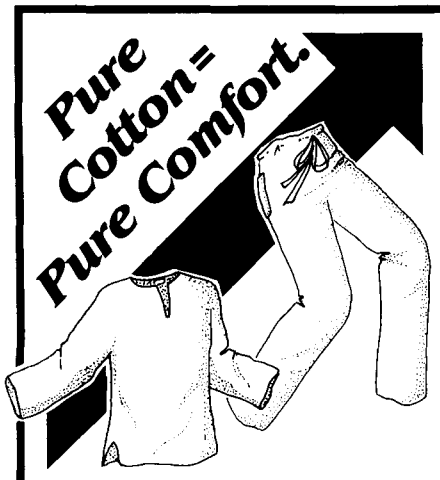

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# OXFORD DIARIST

## *Pole's Law*

**UNLESS THERE IS** something very wrong with the information reaching the old country, there no longer seems to be room for doubt about the validity of the following hypothesis: every American President makes his predecessor look good. This observation—Pole's Law, let's call it—has held its own, with some qualifications, since the death of Franklin Roosevelt.

**TO SOME EXTENT** the Law, as it has worked so far, is an offshoot of the media effect. Because the gestures, grimaces, and trivial mistakes of Presidents are under steadily increasing pictorial scrutiny, it is steadily harder for a given President to *look* good compared to his predecessor. And when a President addresses the nation on television, his speech is immediately subjected to an undignified post-mortem. No sooner has his face faded from the screen than a panel of political analysts will pick his speech to pieces and devour it like fresh carrion. Ronald Reagan, an experienced performer, has been able to overcome such intrusions. But far more of a President's current standing turns on immediate, and ephemeral, impressions than used to be the case. And as these irritations blur into the past, they disappear from the receding image of a past President. Appearance inevitably depends to some extent on the point of observation. For example, during his lifetime, John Kennedy certainly did not make Eisenhower look the better President, but the passage of time did a good deal to alter the perspective. Kennedy generated an excitement that he had no means to satisfy. In foreign affairs and in terms of legislative achievement his record was abysmal. The blandness and self-satisfaction that Eisenhower quietly encouraged looked agreeably calm and safe when compared with the Bay of Pigs fiasco or the missile crisis, for which we now know Robert Kennedy had far more responsibility than was thought in the moment of triumph. At that moment it was also easy to overlook the fact that Cuba got from the settlement the nonaggression guarantee that could have averted the crisis in the first place. Of course, it would be ludicrous to claim that F.D.R. made his predecessor, Herbert Hoover, look good; and no successor could have looked as good as F.D.R. Harry Truman grew in stature as he gained in experience, but he never gave an adequate impression of scale. Truman did not seem to realize that when he protected a crooked political crony or lost his temper over trifles, he depreciated his office and thus his authority; he frequently angered Americans because, as their President, he embarrassed them. Yet in the Eisenhower years, Truman began to look better and better. The recent revival of historians' respect for Eisenhower is a characteristic phenomenon of distance. During his Presidency, he conveyed an air of lazy self-indulgence and failure of vision.

**THE FACT THAT** the Law implicates Lyndon Johnson is the cruelest irony of the period. On the home front he succeeded where Kennedy failed. But it was Johnson who brought the word "credibility" into fashion, by having so little of it. He deceived the people about his intentions in Vietnam, and the war he launched was to cost fifty thousand American lives. There were scandals, too; and the curious episode when, after a surgical operation, the President pulled up his pajamas to show photographers his scar. No, Johnson didn't *look* good, and people sighed for the style and youth and glitter of Camelot. Nixon, on the other hand, achieved the remarkable feat of making Johnson look good. If Johnson lacked the dignity of office, Nixon never threw off the image of the shady used-car dealer, bringing to a fine art the ability to convey the conviction that the President was not telling the truth. But what of Gerald Ford, apparently a weak link in this argument? Ford's intellectual incoherence blended nicely with his physical ineptitude to give his predecessor a kind of pathetic dignity, and if Ford had enjoyed a full term I believe he would have proved the rule. Indeed, the electorate's verdict in 1976 proved it for him.

**JIMMY CARTER** possessed arguably one of the best Presidential brains of this century, but he lacked the sense of political process. Instead of learning from experience, he appeared to defy experience. He got certain important priorities right—energy, human rights, SALT II—and pulled off the Camp David agreement. But he got the politics wrong, and showed a strange incomprehension of the importance of communication. In July 1979 he announced a crisis of confidence in the national spirit; but it was really a crisis of confidence in himself. Self-deception is a wonderful safeguard but it only shields the self-deceived. The only year in which Carter's brand of calculating innocence could have won the Presidency was 1976. His lack of professionalism succeeded in making Ford look like a genuine politician of a recognized and dependable style. Where Carter failed to communicate, Reagan emerged as "the great communicator." However, persuasion soon began to appear as an end in itself, regardless of the message: but the message itself has been getting more and more indigestible. Mr. Reagan reinforces the point of the Law because he is the most alarming example to date of a disturbingly familiar phenomenon: the American President whose political education has to begin all over again when he assumes office. Last year's pipeline affair, for example, was not a case of mere untutored political ineptitude. No less a convinced ally than Margaret Thatcher compared it to being "stabbed by a friend." Since then Mr. Reagan has hardly looked back. His combination of insensitivity to his allies and belligerence to his opponents, fired by a self-righteousness hardly seen since the days of John Foster Dulles, has done nothing for European confidence in American leadership. The feeling of insecurity—itself a source of instability—is not confined to the ranks of committed nuclear disarmers. There are signs of it everywhere, including right-wing British Tories. A President who seldom reads, listens with difficulty to long explanations, and has little comprehension of the complexities of the world around him is rapidly making Carter look superior. There may be hope, however, that Pole's Law is coming to the end of its natural life. No obvious recipe exists for making Reagan look good.

**J. R. POLE**

J. R. Pole, Rhodes Professor of American History and Institutions at Oxford University, is a frequent visitor to the United States.

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